

INSIDE SOCCER

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THE QUALITY WEEKLY DEVOTED TO OZ SOCCER...

GREG BLAKE CHECKS OUT CARLTON'S BRIT PACK. P.8



D-DAY FOR CRISIS CLUB

Just 17 days to go until the start of potentially the biggest NSL season in history and we are still not sure whether it's a 16 or 17 team competition. Adelaide-based Southern Stars should know their fate by 5pm today (Tues.), after a series of legal stays of execution by financial administrator Mr. Bruce Mulvaney.

The Southern Stars were admitted ahead of the rival Adelaide United bid. Representative Peter Emery told *Inside Soccer* last night he felt the United bid was strong: "We were squeezed out. Our bid was supported by community clubs ... we planned to raise money with a public float; three Adelaide stockbrokers agreed to underwrite this.

"We also had a strategic alliance with Manchester United. At the moment we have Adelaide Force and Adelaide Farce!" commented Emery.

Adelaide showed there is a support base for Soccer with a crowd of 8,791 for the premier and state league Grand Finals last Friday night at the remodeled Hindmarsh Stadium.

The dispute is over control by the Stars' business backers, and the deed of arrangement, which is impacting on their ability to pay their creditors.

The Sharks were bailed out of financial administration five weeks ago by a group of six businessmen who agreed to pay creditors \$475,000 over six months.

The first payment of \$275,000 was due early last week but Mulvaney gave the club breathing space after it failed to meet the initial deadline.

The club failed to meet the second deadline and was given until today. Makris is currently in Greece following the earthquake that hit Athens.

If the Southern Stars did not make the NSL, the fixtures would once again have to be adjusted. Ironically, it is the Southern Stars that currently have a bye in round one.

Stars coach Adrian Santrac said that it was difficult for him and his players but he felt the Stars is a totally different club to the Sharks: "We are pretty confident but it doesn't help the players and the coaching staff to have this legal situation. At the end of the day we can't control what the courts do ... this year will build the foundations for the future."

Stars' guarantor Zis Ginos said the Stars and the Sharks were essentially the same club but with a different approach. "There is no real difference. Just a change of name and change of management.

"We are in the league and the facts are there. Makris had 51% voting rights but relinquished those rights. He then came back and said he had the rights, and now the administrator is gathering the data to show he does not have the rights."

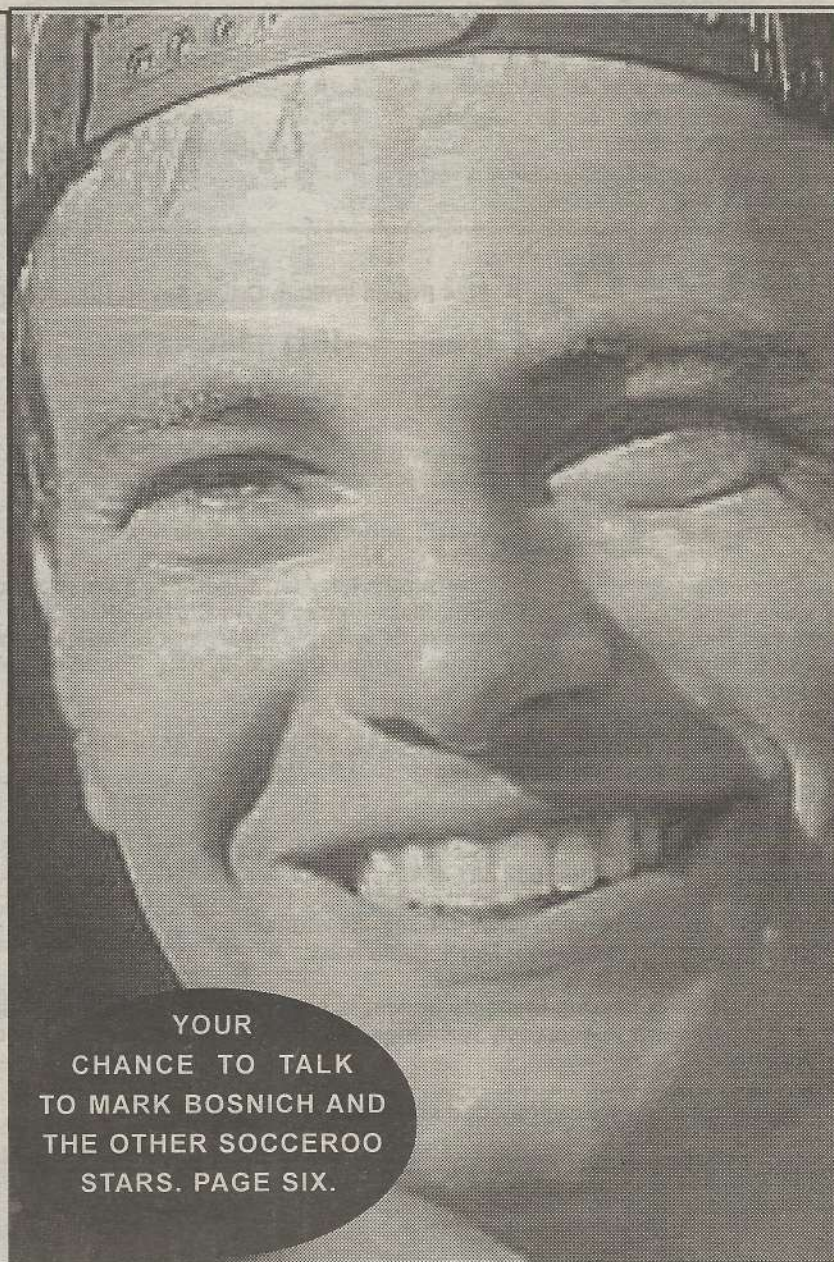
If Makris won today, the club would probably go into liquidation.

"We could still play in the NSL in that scenario but (he pauses) I am not really sure of the details. There is room for everyone, including the old Sharks/West Adelaide Greek fan base. It's been a stop-start pre-season and it has put us a bit behind," said Ginos.

The issue of NSL marketing rights is the other hot story of the week. With such a short lead-in time, Soccer Australia and the Rivkin group are working towards a naming rights sponsor to succeed Ericsson.

"We are having serious discussions with Rivkin regarding this issue. Losing Ericsson won't financially impact on the clubs," said Soccer Australia Chairman Basil Scarsella.

The rumour is that Ansett will be the new naming rights sponsor of the NSL.



YOUR
CHANCE TO TALK
TO MARK BOSNICH AND
THE OTHER SOCCEROO
STARS. PAGE SIX.



SPIRIT OPEN DAY PLUS...
ANGE POSTECOGLOU
GRAHAM ARNOLD
BILL TURNER SCHOOLS CUP
AND ALL THE LATEST IN AUSTRALIA

GLORY FANS TO GET TV COVERAGE?



The push is on to have Glory games shown on Perth's Channel 31. The station is beamed throughout metropolitan Perth and are very keen to show the club's games to the massive support base Glory now has.

An independent production company would put together a package of televised games and possibly a round-up.

The sticking point is Channel 7; the network has rights to broadcasting Australian soccer.

Channel 7 Perth program director Jamie Martnovich has said he had been in touch with the network's director of sport about the plan.

"I've signalled to my network and asked for a ruling on whether they would allow Perth Glory to go ahead with the arrangement with Channel 31," he said to the West Australian newspaper.

Glory general manager Roger Lefort said it would be a tremendous bonus to club supporters and sponsors if Channel 31 got the nod.

"At the moment it is looking very positive but the decision is with Channel 7 in Sydney," explained Lefort.

Channel 31 program manager

Jay Still said to Inside Soccer last night that the station's relationship with Channel 7 Perth is excellent and they are very supportive of the idea. "We went public last week with our plans and we've had a great response. We're really keen to start this season, but if we got it we are already behind schedule, so we would probably miss the first couple of games.

"It's obvious in Perth there is a huge following for Glory and we would like to give those fans what they want," said Still.

The decision would now appear to be in the hands of the national networkers in the East. Hopefully the impressive ratings for Glory's finals campaign last season will be taken into consideration.

Channel 31's fax number is (08) 9370 6531 (attention Jay Still) if you wish to register your support for this great idea.

In other news, Southampton have bought the Australian football academy in Perth from WestHam, and Glory are looking at a couple of Brazilian players.

S-NEWS

INSIDE SOCCER'S AUSTRALIAN NEWS AND GOSS

KEWELLS MEET FARINA

late last week our new national coach Frank Farina had a private meeting with the Mum and Dad of Harry Kewell. Our new boss was there to clear the air and let them know what he has in mind for the future. And Farina's approach is working; Mark Schwarzer is back with us. Onya Frank.

ALGERIAN FOR KNIGHTS?

Mark Silic (St Albans Saints) has been signed by the Melbourne Knights. He should work in tandem with Ante Deak, if Deak has not already signed with Sydney Utd. And an Algerian stopper is coming to Somers Street to trial with the Knights during the pre-season. Algeria??

FANTASTIC SOCCER MOVIE

You've got to see this. There is an Australian-Bhutanese movie called *The Cup* about monks getting caught up in Soccer fever around World Cup time. It won the Grand Jury prize at the first Noosa Film Festival, winning itself \$50,000. This award follows being selected for the Director's Fortnight at the Cannes Film Festival. *The Cup*. You heard it first here.

OK, WHERE'S MY PHONE?

You have to feel sorry for Marconi's Assistant Football Manager Ross 'The Boss' Musso. The day after the club's big media and sponsors launch, the media was calling him every few minutes. Sadly, during the excitement of the day, the poor fella lost his phone and had to rapidly get a new number. Talk about bad timing.

CARLTON BEAT Y/VILLE

Carlton defeated Yarraville 2-0 in a mid-week friendly match. Coach Stuart Munro took the opportunity to give much needed match practise for those who haven't been playing full games in the Blue Ribbon Cup. Craig Deans played his first game for Carlton as did Markovski, Anthopoulos, Pir, Della Rocca and Cagalj. Goal scorers were Packer and Pir.

CHARITY GIG IN MELB

The Four Diegos will present a charity gig for the Victoria Police Blue Ribbon Foundation this Friday at the Champions Sports Bar at South Melbourne Soccer Club. All proceeds go to a worthy cause. Call 0414245 576.

SPONSORSHIP ROCKS!

Is there an Australian band out there wanting some great publicity? Here's an idea from England. Welsh band Super furry animals will have their name on the shirt of Cardiff City football club under a sponsorship deal. The team will now sport the Furies' logo on their shirts during Welsh Cup matches this season. The band are believed to have paid over £10,000 for the naming rights.

SPIRIT SUPPORTERS

They are an organised lot those Bob Standers. The Supporters' Committee have a website, launched this week, at <http://spirit.webcity.com.au/Parklife>. And to join the Spirit Internet mailing list go to list-server@isfa2.com with the message body 'join spirit'. And they also organise trips to just about every away game, including Auckland (love to hear how that trip goes guys??). To book call 0411028765 or E-mail julianfloyd@yahoo.com. And speaking of Spirit supporters, apparently a bit of humour in our recent interview with their fanzine head honchos Fergus and McCormack did not go down too well at Sydney Utd. The lads suggested -- with tongue firmly in cheek -- that the profits of their fanzine 'Three Points and a Hangover' may go to buying the naming rights to Sydney United. A United fan faxed the club to complain about the lads' temer-

ity in suggesting this.

TYPICAL OCEANIA

World power Tonga have been admitted at late notice for the World Club Championship Oceania qualifiers. Our Fiji correspondent tells us that Lotohai'apai Football Club is now in Pool C. Yes that's right Pool C. Originally it was two groups of four, now it's three groups of three. South Melbourne is in Pool A with Malaita Eagles (Solomon Isles) and Konica from American Samoa. Pool B sees local side Nadi, Tahiti's AS Venus and Kiwi Football Club from Samoa. Pool C has danger New Zealand side Central, Tafea from Vanuatu and the said side from Tonga. The tournament takes place in Nadi. "There's only one Lotohai'apai, one Lotohai'apai, one Lotohai'apai, there's only one Lotohai'apai," sing their fans. The Blues of South Melbourne will arrive tomorrow (Wed) and are paired with Manchester United should they succeed in Oceania. Go the Blues.

TIE FOR AWARD

Congratulations to Rodney White and Daniel Gomez who took out Gippsland Soccer League's Best and Fairest Award. And fans down there, don't forget the Battle of Britain Cup Final (!!) at Falcons Park this Sunday. It's between Warragul and Churchill.

MIXING WITH SOCCER

Radio station MIX 106.5 is getting into the spirit (sorry) promoting Northern Spirit. They heavily advertised the Open Day last Sunday (Robbie Slater's ads were very good, well-done Bulldog) and they are sponsoring the club's memberships. They have a MIX 106 FM Club Spirit for adults (it's an adults station see?) and 96.1 FM Club H for under 17s (it's predominantly for 'young people'). Spirit also has an 8 Game Pass and all sorts of value added things to tempt you out for a Friday night of Football. Call the club on 9460 2187 or E-mail: inquiriescontact@northernspirit.com.au. Spirit's Clayton Zane is due back today after a trial with Molde in Norway.

SERIOUS INJURY HITS SPITERI

We wish Joe Spiteri all the best after injury looks like robbing him of his European career. Spiteri injured his foot again a fortnight ago against Germinal Beerschot. Spiteri publicly criticised Lierse's medical staff after they miss-diagnosed his injury. He was convinced that bones had been broken, but the medics thought otherwise and he played the following week with pain-killers. And QPR's George Kulscar is still recovering from meningitis. Fortunately Viral meningitis is relatively mild, whereas the meningococcal variety is potentially fatal.

KING DINO

An achilles tendon injury has laid up Auckland Kingz coach Wynton Rufer, who is currently looking at two Chilean players to bolster his squad. The new NSL side played a warm-up game against a Waikato XI mid-week. The Kingz



had to rely on the one of their Australian signings, utility player Dino Menillo (pictured) to score the only goal of the game, reported the NZ Weekly Soccer Observer. The Kingz are due here shortly for a tour of Sydney, where we hope to catch up with NSL character Marcus 'The King of Sale' Stergiopoulos.



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IT'S THE FRANK AND ARNIE SHOW

SOCCEROO DOUBLE-ACT BACK TOGETHER FOR OUR 2002 CAMPAIGN

By Aidan Ormond

Australian coaching's new guard is continuing its move into the national ranks with the confirmation that Graham Arnold will be assistant to newly-appointed national coach Frank Farina.

Arnold's position is part-time, giving him the opportunity to stay in control of the coaching reins at one of Australia's

their respect on the field. Frankie will be the boss, and I will be the one who picks up those who don't make the team and make the squad as happy as possible.

"Obviously I will be supporting Frankie 120% and I think that may have been part of the reason why he chose me, because he knows I would never go behind his back, and that is very important for an assistant coach ... that they don't have another agenda.

"I feel comfortable with Crooky (Ian Crook) at Spirit as my assistant. I know that when I am away he doesn't have an ulterior motive."

Crook will take over when necessary at training and probably coach one game during the coming season.

So what did Arnold learn from his first year of coaching last season?

"It's a lot harder than I expected! I still haven't experienced coaching from the sidelines yet, given I had to play so much because of injuries. I think man-management is very important - I don't like to be standing over the players cracking the whip, I am not hardheaded, I like to stay on good terms with the players. Being a player/coach is not easy though."

Arnold has not decided if he will play this year. He has done the pre-season as a player, and feels that if the team doesn't need him he would rather coach from the sidelines and leave the playing side of it to Ian Crook and the rest of the squad. "I will play if need be."

Arnold emphasizes the importance of one thing, and that's preparation for the Socceroos.

"I think the main thing is we take the camps to Europe, and regularly play games over there because 90% of our players will be in Europe. Also a four nation style tournament in Australia at the end of the European season would be great for the local fans."

"Good communication with the players is important, but first and foremost is the preparation. Of the four campaigns I

Speaking of Harry Kewell, Arnold's position clearly reflects his understanding of what it is like as a player, particularly in Europe. "Look, I know Harry and his family personally and I know he has one burning ambition, and that's to play for Australia in the World Cup.

"What people forget is that Harry is still just a kid - he is only 20 and you tend to forget that, yet he plays 60 odd games a year in England.

"The kid still has pressure on him at Leeds and he is still finding his feet. I don't see why we should be making his life any harder. He has shown that he wants to play for Australia and I am pretty sure you will see him playing regularly for the Socceroos."

Given the hue and cry over Kewell's non-appearance with the Olyroos, Arnold says there is a distinction. "The Olyroos have nothing to do with the Socceroos at the moment. I can understand Raul wanting to have him (Kewell) in camp as much as possible. One thing is for certain, Harry will play for Australia at the Olympics in 2000."

Back at club level and he is confident that the arrival of David Seal (see interview

next week) can solve the scoring problem, and the youngsters used last season - necessitated by a long injury list - will be better for the experience.

"And of course I have Perinich and Troy Cranney, who were injured last season and are now coming back," Arnold added.

"Always the second year is a difficult one. We want to make sure we are up again in the Finals for our sensational



Graham Arnold: "Australian Soccer is heading in the right direction," says our new national assistant coach.

fans.

"Australian soccer is heading in the right direction. Soccer is on its way up. A lot of other clubs are now doing what we have been doing - I believe in Northern Spirit, that is why I, along with Ian Crook and Robbie Slater, financially invested in the club."

And Soccer Australia too is hoping its investment in Arnold and Farina will reap dividends.

This will be a very busy two years for Graham Arnold, but when you have a real passion for what you do, you can achieve anything, especially as the World Cup is the one thing that has eluded him during his illustrious national team career.

Footnote: Frank Farina's influence is starting to tell, with Mark Schwarzer announcing that he is back with the Socceroos for the World Cup campaign. Currently virtually all our Euro Roos have committed to the Brazil tour in November, including Harry Kewell.



"Harry is still just a kid," says Arnold of Harry Kewell.

biggest clubs, Northern Spirit.

However, after season 99/2000, the national team will have an even busier schedule in the lead-up to the World Cup qualifiers.

The decision to take up the post was not a hard one for Arnold. "It wasn't too difficult a decision. It was however totally unexpected ... I never got a chance to play for Australia in the World Cup so it wasn't too hard to make the decision so soon after retiring as a player."

"It's probably the next best thing, to help coach the Socceroos to the World Cup rather than playing," he said.

As for the time taken away from the Spirit coaching position and Arnold was confident that there should not be a significant problem. "It's a little unknown, we are going into it with an open mind. In the first year it's definitely part-time," he added, leaving open the possibility of a more committed schedule in the 2000/2001 season.

"We have the program planned in the first twelve months, so I would have six to eight weeks in camp in the first year, plus the behind-the-scenes stuff."

"All I do know is that I don't want it to interfere with Spirit, and that's where my priority is. If the position were offered to me full-time I would not have taken it. I have started something at Northern Spirit and I don't want to jeopardize the club."

In Arnold's eyes, what makes a good assistant coach is the ability to be trusted and respected. "I think to be able to mix with the players socially as well as have



Mark Schwarzer ... the Socceroo keeper is back with Farina's Socceroos.

think preparation was to blame for not qualifying, particularly in the last one.

"If we plan now we may be able to book friendlies a year from today. You can't just call up and say 'do you want a game next week?'"

Because of the difficulty of releasing star players such as Bosnich, Viduka and Kewell, any friendlies will not include club sides.

"He (Frank Farina) knows I would never go behind his back."

Graham Arnold on his appointment

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Champs in fine form but Blues miss a beat

By Luciano Viggiano

In their last match before jetting off to the Oceania Club Championships in Fiji, the reigning Ericsson Cup champions did just enough to defeat a Gippsland side which offered little resistance in the Blue Ribbon Cup.

In perfect conditions the finely tuned South Melbourne machine played their usual free flowing attacking game with the Orlic and Liparoti standing tall in defence, Clarkson and then later Trimboli controlling the midfield with Panopolous and Tsekini, Lozanovski and Coveney providing numerous attacking options.

The Falcons on the other hand battled hard in midfield but never threatened the South Melbourne goal.

The game began at a quick pace with the Falcons having the better of play through the never say die efforts of Robbie Puca down the flank and the security at the back offered by Durakovic in his second appearance for the club.

The Falcons threatened with a corner in the 10th minute which seemed to wake South Melbourne, who quickly moved up a gear and gained control of the midfield.

The influence of Lozanovski became evident when he drew a foul in the 25th minute and proceeded to deliver a copy-book curling cross to the far post. It was met by Tsekini with a powerful header that Jevdjovic could only watch hit the back of his net; 1-0 South Melbourne.

The combination and domination of Clarkson, Panopolous and Lozanovski in midfield lead to the second goal in the 35th minute, which split the Falcons, defence down the middle. Coveney running through to collect a pass and hitting a powerful shot from just inside the box into the top corner of the net; 2-0 South Melbourne.

With only minutes to play in the first half, South Melbourne drew yet another corner from which the Falcons Sandy Robertson was stretchered off the field after a strong collision at the far post.

With the win their's, the second half was played with less intensity and Ange Postecoglou took advantage by ringing the changes, which seemed to have little impact on the free flowing game that South Melbourne continued to play.

The Falcons tried hard without creating any clear-cut chances and as always the likes of MacNicol, Hastie and Puca toiled away with little return. Juan Nilo a former Falcons youth player who has built quite a reputation in the Victorian Premier League as a goal poacher performed well against the champions defence, but clearly lacked support and any opportunity to show his worth.

The third and final goal came late in the game when the Falcons failed to clear the ball from the penalty area and Coveney put away the loose ball through a

crowded defence; 3-0 South Melbourne.

Overall, South Melbourne looked impressive without having to do too much. They showed their ability to go up a gear when needed and that they have the depth of players to ensure not only a visit to South America in the new year, but that they are a realistic chance to go three in a row.

The Falcons on the other hand were competitive in defence and midfield, but their inability to create genuine scoring chances must be a real concern for new coach Jeff Hopkins who has failed to see his side score in their three games to date.

GIPPSLAND FALCONS

Jevdjovic; Durakovic; Gotis (Buhargiar 42 min); Fak; Marcina; Puca; Roberston (Hutchinson 42 min); Hastie; Vargas; MacNicol; Nilo Subs not used: Katz; Savage

SOUTH MELBOURNE

Udvaracz (Jones H/T); Iosifidis; De Amicis; Orlic; Liparoti; Clarkson (Trimboli H/T); Panapoulos; Coveney; Curcija; Lozanovski; Tsekini Other subs used: Magnacca; Alagich; Mustafa; Goutzioulis

A late goal from Brandon Vassallo condemned Carlton to a 2-1 defeat against the Melbourne Knights in the other game, reported Carlton's official club net site.

Archie Thompson had cancelled out Ivan Kelic's first-half strike on the hour before Vassallo struck.

Carlton signing Stuart Slater played a full 90 minutes and enjoyed a fine game out of midfield. The Englishman had a good claim for a first-half penalty turned down and showed plenty of nimble touches on the ball.

John Markovski, who was the Blues' outstanding player on the day, forced Knights' keeper Martin John into a stunning save in the first-half with a clever lob, before teeing up Thompson for Carlton's opening strike.

Defender Craig Deans had 20 minutes as a late substitute. The former Perth Glory star moved freely and showed plenty of composure at the back.

Referee Gerry Connolly's last act of the game was to send off Carlton substitute Andy Packer after he had taken a swipe at Knights skipper, Ante Kovacevic.

And today at Melbourne's Crown Casino South Melbourne will announce two new sponsors.

The Govt program Smokefree Vic Health and GDL medical services have both committed to three years with the club.

Both sponsorship packages are worth six figure sums per year over the next three seasons. The companies will feature on the South Melbourne shirt.

The press conference will also be the official sending off for the team. They leave for Fiji on Wednesday for the World Club Championship qualifiers.

7 goal thriller in the wild wild west

By Paul Goodwin

Parramatta Power began their tour of the south and west of the continent with a game on Sunday afternoon at Litis Stadium, Perth, the one-time velodrome home of the Floreat Athena WA State League club, against Perth Glory.

Power had a good workout and enjoyed a 4-3 success to cap off some other good recent trial performances.

With a stiff breeze at their backs and enjoying the added comfort of a well grassed local pitch, the Sydney visitors managed to establish a 2-0 lead by half-time with goals from Mile Sterjovski and Joel Griffiths.

Sterjovski's was an individual effort, the player advancing quickly into the Glory defensive zone before beating the keeper nicely.

A little later exciting teenage prospect Joel Griffiths exchanged passes with ace marksman Sterjovski and then tucked the ball past Tony Franken, who was responsible for a number of excellent saves during the match.

Parramatta found it a lot harder playing into the wind in the second period and it was not long before Glory were on level terms.

They won a penalty when Richard Plesa claimed the ball in a tackle, but unfairly, according to the referee and Bobby Despotovski slotted away the spot kick.

Robert Trajkovski then curled a free kick from the left around the wall, for a deserved equaliser and this then had Power on the back foot.

It looked even worse for the Parramatta side when Perth's first signing of the summer, Ivan Ergic from the AIS, got Glory ahead nearing the end.

Ergic, the scorer of four goals the previous week in West Australian team's hammering of a local amateur side, made a swift run down the right, then cut inside and blasted the ball into the roof of the net.

But Power came back to equalise through substitute John Gibson in the



Joel Griffiths ... scored on the weekend as Power beat Glory 4-3.

82nd and grabbed the winner in the last few minutes thanks to a great volley from Steve Eagleton, assisted by new South Australian arrival Lachlan Campbell, another player who came off the bench in the second period.

Gibson made a good run in tandem with John Angelucci and after feeding the former Blacktown City Demon with a searching ball out wide on the right, he was then able to get a header on target from the resulting cross.

Eagleton volleyed home from the edge of the box after a smart cross from the left by Campbell.

Milan Blagojevic returned to the side after a slight injury in a game that drew a crowd of around 2,800 to the attractive arena.

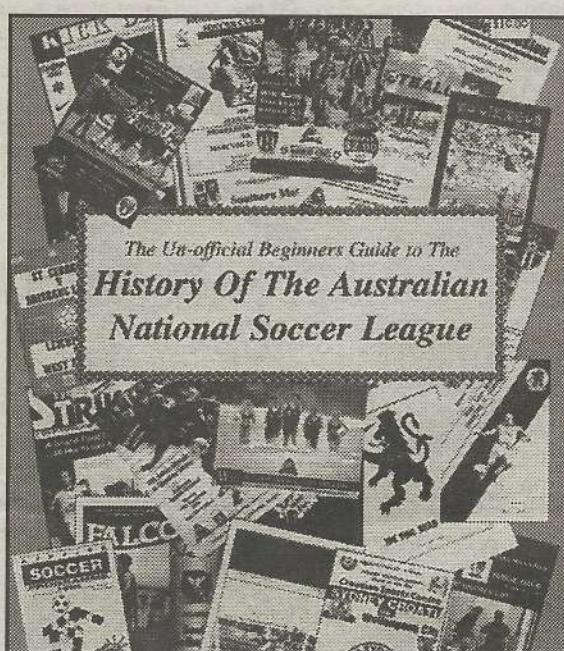
PERTH GLORY: Franken, Trajkovski, Vrkic, Plesa, Santalab, D. Carbone, Ergic, Afkos, Despotovski (Valle), Boutsianos

PARRAMATTA POWER: Crews, Eagleton, Vrkic, Plesa, Santalab, D. Townsend (Elrich), Ardane (Angelucci), Blagojevic, Bennett (Campbell), Griffiths (J. Gibson), Sterjovski

In other news ... Power next take on a WA Under 23 side on Wednesday night, before travelling on to Adelaide to play the Southern Stars on Friday night.

Glory also play the WA State side, their game being on Saturday and follow that with two games against Adelaide Force the first at Busselton on Saturday 25th and the second back at Litis Stadium on Monday 27th.

In other games, Sydney United beat a Macedonian select side 4-0 and on the weekend beat Wolves 2-1 in Wollongong (scorers Boseski and Kupresak). The Pumas play Olympic tomorrow night (Wed) 7pm at Edensor. Andy Harper is expected to sign this week with Newcastle Breakers. Sadly Brad Wiecek needed an operation for a muscle problem, Greg Owens has been injured and Tom Haythornthwaite has had to quit the game due to ligament problems. The Breakers play the Pumas this weekend and Marconi probably next week.



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MARCONI LAUNCHES NEW MILLENNIUM MARKETING BLITZ

By Aidan Ormond

Last week Marconi held their official media launch to announce a new marketing direction designed to propel the club into the new millennium. A sports bar at Sydney's Darling Harbour (on the edge of the city) was the location for the morning event that featured the club's new logo, kit and name change.

The club is now officially the Marconi Stallions (dropping the Fairfield from their

son is away against Parramatta Power at the Powerhouse. Many say the inclusion of this club, with the strong backing of a profitable Leagues Club, hastened Marconi's progress towards its current marketing plan.

Marconi President Tony Labbozzetta, who spoke at the launch, said in the impressive media kit that the club's changes were designed to build on their strong financial and historic foundations in the NSL. 'Marconi is one of the oldest, most established, financially secure clubs in the NSL, with a very good record over the history of the Club,' he said.

The club used the Stenmark Marketing team for its recommendations that were put to the club's board and voted on.

All home games will be played on a Sunday at 6pm (with possible changes for TV the only factor likely to bring forward the kick-off time). Speaking of TV, the launch was covered by at least three Sydney TV stations, so in that regard, the launch achieved its goal.

WHAT THE STALLIONS WERE SAYING AFTER THE LAUNCH

KRIS TRJANOVSKI (left):

"With Harry (Karl) and the new Italians coming in there is going competition for strikers. Hopefully I could be a striker this year too; I feel it is my favourite position. I was put in as a wingback to just do a job last year for Frank after we had so many injuries.

"I think we are looking for a top two finish especially with these new acquisitions. As you saw on the weekend we had five or six on the bench and four not even on the teamsheet.

"I think we have a bigger roster than the Sydney Swans!"

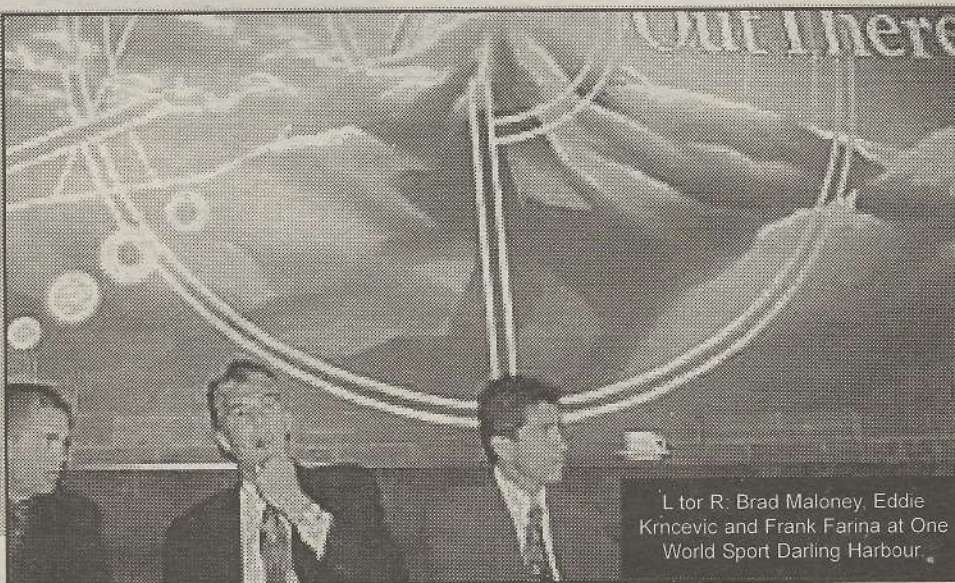
SEAN BABIC:

"It is going to be a strong squad. And with Eddie we are going very professional — the diet, the way we prepare ourselves, the warm downs. Everyone has really responded and we can't wait to have the season start.

"He knows how players feel, everyone knows what to do and it is running like clockwork.

"Last year we were lacking depth, and it can make everyone try harder in their position. The new Italians know the basics of English but it is okay with them, but even their positions aren't secure.

"With the marketing it won't be easy, but the club is very multicultural — just look at the people who attend the Marconi Social Club — and we have to grab the kids who bring the family with them.



L to R: Brad Maloney, Eddie Krncevic and Frank Farina at One World Sport Darling Harbour.

"We too have to bring in the results on the park to help. I think players respond when there is a bigger crowd. We can get anything up to 10,000 average this year, and yeah, I can't wait for the season to start.

MARK BABIC:

"For us it's a change ... we have to look ahead as players and a club. Support does go a long way, and you notice that when you go to some other clubs.

"The club itself has an Italian history but there is a range of people who come to

the social club. It is basically a club for everyone ... and we want it to be seen as more of a mainstream club. That's where the barriers have been in the past.

"Right now I have a personal goal of finishing my degree and getting my qualifications, so once my career is over I will have something to fall back on."

And in a way that is what the club is doing with this new marketing plan — ensuring that their future is strong going into the new millennium.



name and incorporating their nickname as part of their official moniker. A small change it may be, but it was their logo — once the source of much angst between the club and the national association — that has been completely redesigned, the wireless imagery synonymous with Guiglielmo Marconi replaced with a Stallion.

The new kit is a move away from the 'Thunderbirds' style of the last two seasons — it is a stylish round neck design made by Asics. The shirt is the traditional light blue with the shorts and socks predominantly blue/purple (a homage to Glory perhaps?). The club's cheerleaders, the Stallionettes, who also performed at the launch, modeled the kit.

The launch was also the official handing over of reins by Frank Farina — the new national coach — to Eddie Krncevic. Ironically, Marconi's first home game, the round three clash on October 17 is against Krncevic's former club, Carlton.

The suave Marconi coach would dearly love a win in front of what is expected to be a 10,000 plus crowd.

In fact the club's first game of the sea-



Eddie Krncevic speaks to the media after the launch. The event was shown by at least three Sydney TV stations.

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MY WORLD IS ROUND

Frank Farina's personal playing history

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The first correct entry drawn on Friday Oct 1 will win the CD signed by Ice Cream Headache. The winner will be announced in the Inside Soccer issue of Oct 5.

SLATER LOOKING GOOD FOR SPIRIT

By Paul Goodwin

Northern Spirit turned out in very cool conditions on Friday night against a side assembled from the Premier League clubs of the Gladesville Hornsby Association, coached on this occasion by former Melita star Don Allan.

On the exposed Christie Park plateau at Marsfield Northern Spirit played a measured game against the well motivated local Bears players and ran out comfortable 4-0 winners.

They also won an early game against Thornleigh with their Youth team by the same scoreline.

The game featured one of Robbie Slater's rare outings so far this pre-season campaign and the old bulldog looked the goods, pleasing a crowd in excess of 2,000 with his characteristic bursts upfield.

He set up Michael Cunico for a heading opportunity in the first few minutes and it took a good save by the keeper to keep the ball out.

Club captain Slater and Player-Coach Graham Arnold played their first game together for a while, with Arnold, who played as a striker throughout, staying on to complete the match and Slater looking fit and sharp, coming off at half time.

Three goalkeepers were used, John Perosh giving way to Jess Van Stratten midway through the first half and Paul Henderson coming on for the last fifteen minutes of the game.

A 14th minute Matt Langdon corner on the right saw the Bears keeper call for the ball at the near post only for defender Brett Cooper to nod the ball past him into his own net to open the scoring.

Michael Cunico won possession in the 29th and fed Slater on the right who set sail for goal and when he was able to cut the ball back from the byline, Langdon had a simple far post tap-in to make it 2-0.

Adam Snyder exchanged passes with Simon Catanzaro before lifting the ball past the keeper just three minutes after coming on at half time, and a few



The Bulldog is back! ... Spirit's Robbie Slater had a strong game against the G/ville Hornsby Assoc.

minutes later Langdon cut in from wide on the left to fire a right-footed shot in off the left post for the 4-0 final score.

Arnold also headed one against the post in the first half and missed a number of close chances in the second.

Gladesville played good football and were not disgraced at any stage.

Scott Tarrant made some willing runs down the left flank and David Burge and Kurt Morrison were prominent in holding roles, with the team's keepers both showing plenty of confidence.



GVILLE HORNSBY:

Wise, Cooper, Papadimitrou, Murray, Simmons, Morrison (C), Seale, Tsakalos, Bosward, Burge, Tarrant, Welch, Quinlan, Twining, Gerard, Barrett (substitutes changed throughout)

NORTHERN SPIRIT:

Perosh (Van Stratten, Henderson), Rudan (Sobczyk), Casserly, Culina (A Griffiths), Bilokapic, Cunico (Lyons), Cranney, Catanzaro (Lyons), Langdon, Slater (C) (Snyder), Arnold

Referee: Brett Hugo



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GET YOUR HANDS ON ONE

SPEAK TO HARRY AND BOZZA

As you are all aware, Frank Farina is meeting with the overseas-based players in the UK in early October. Frank thought it might be timely to give the players an idea of the depth of feeling there exists amongst fans about us getting to the next World Cup - so they know that it's not only players who feel that way too, and the extent to which we support them.

His view is that players are just not aware of the depth of passion amongst Australian supporters.

So, if you would like the opportunity to 'speak' to the OS players, this is it!

Please e-mail your message/thoughts/whatever to me Bonnie Merslades (either on-list or to bon@webcity.com.au) by 24 September and they will all be passed to Frank who will take them with him.

(Please try to limit your contributions to one A4 page in length when printed.)



Mark Bosnich: Send your messages to him and our other star Socceroos

POWER SET FOR NATIONAL TOUR BEFORE OCT 1 OPENER

By Paul Goodwin

As part of their long term strategy to test the water for a potential move up the NSW soccer ladder and perhaps a place in a national competition in the future, NSW 1st Division champions Penrith Panthers entertained the newly formed Parramatta Power in a friendly at Penrith Park last week.

It was also a great chance for the local supporters of the Panthers to welcome home their heroes who had won the title for the first time in the club's history, 11 days earlier at St George Stadium.

At half time the 1st Division side had held the mighty Power to 0-0; not bad for a team of amateurs.

While the final score was 4-0 to Parramatta, the same score they registered in accounting for NSW Super League side Parramatta Eagles a week earlier, most of the goals came in the last 25 minutes.

Both coaches used a plethora of players, Penrith rotating 21 and the Power 17.

Chris Ackerley and Steve Sweeney turned out for Penrith for the first time in weeks after overcoming injuries, the Panthers being best served by the nippy front runner Danny Hinton, sweeper Ben Wright and midfield man Bob Casserly.

Parramatta were able to include two more players who were last with Sydney United, Peter Bennett and goalkeeper Andrew Crews.

Mike Gibson played the early part of

the game for Penrith and kept a clean sheet, but will now return to the Dave Mitchell camp.

Parramatta rotated Crews and Barney Smith in goal and will of course have Gibson to call upon later.

Parramatta took the lead when Mile Sterjovski received a ball played in by Ahmed Elrich, which John Gibson dummied through to the former Sydney United striker.

Ahmed Elrich, a Parramatta Eagles junior this winter, scored from the edge of the 18 yard area after accepting a pass from deep and then Sterjovski notched his second in a bit of a melee, before Walter Ardone, made it four near the end, when his free kick driven in hard from the left of the area skidded past the defence to nestle in the net at the far post.

Power finally sorted out the wrangle over the release of the United players, Bennett and Crews, paying the \$60,000 they needed to deposit with Soccer Australia on the day of the match.

Power lined up as follows:

A. Crews, D. Barrett, J. Vrkic, R. Plesa, M. Santalab, D. Townsend, J. Gibson, W. Ardone, P. Bennett, M. Sterjovski, J. Griffiths, (substitutes included, B. Smith, J. Angelucci, D. Kuckucka, M. Thompson and A. Elrich

Among those absent on this occasion, Milan Blagojevic was rested due to a slight injury to a toe, Steve Berry is recovering from a knee injury and Jacob Burns was still away with the Olyroos.

Assistant coach Lawrie McKinna said after the game that the first half was

an even affair, played at a very steady pace and the tempo was increased markedly in the second half.

He was also impressed with the good surface, which augurs well for Parramatta who will also be using a ground on which rugby league has been played all winter.

A crowd of around 3,500 was attracted to the night game, on a cool spring evening, the second such four figure crowd to attend the venue this year to see the Penrith soccer team play. The last time was for a Division One game against Moorebank when around 5,000 ventured out and that against a side anchored at the bottom with limited box office appeal!

These were far better crowds than the ill fated Penrith City achieved during their short-lived NSL fling back in the early 80s.

There is now a much closer involvement between the Panthers Rugby League club and the soccer club, something the original club had strived to achieve earlier without success.

The size of the crowd could have been bigger still, had the original planned Friday night date been adhered to, but the game was rescheduled.

The change to Thursday did not allow adequate time for Penrith to publicise the event sufficiently to capitalise on the special occasion.

Parramatta Power now take off on a whirlwind tour of the south and west of the country where they will meet Perth Glory,



a WA Under 23 team and, on the way back, a match against the Southern Stars (if they are still an NSL club!) in Adelaide, before playing Canberra Cosmos at the AIS in one of their last trials before the Friday night competition opener against Marconi.

Both games in Perth and the one in Adelaide will be fully publicised in the local area, according to Parramatta Power's Marketing Executive and Assistant Coach Lawrie McKinna.

Sandwiched between their Adelaide and Canberra matches will be the club's official launch later this month.

The Cosmos game on Saturday 25th will be played at the Australian Institute of Sport.

The new Power logo (above) was chosen from a competition run in local papers. McKinna said it was chosen to represent "togetherness, strength and commitment."

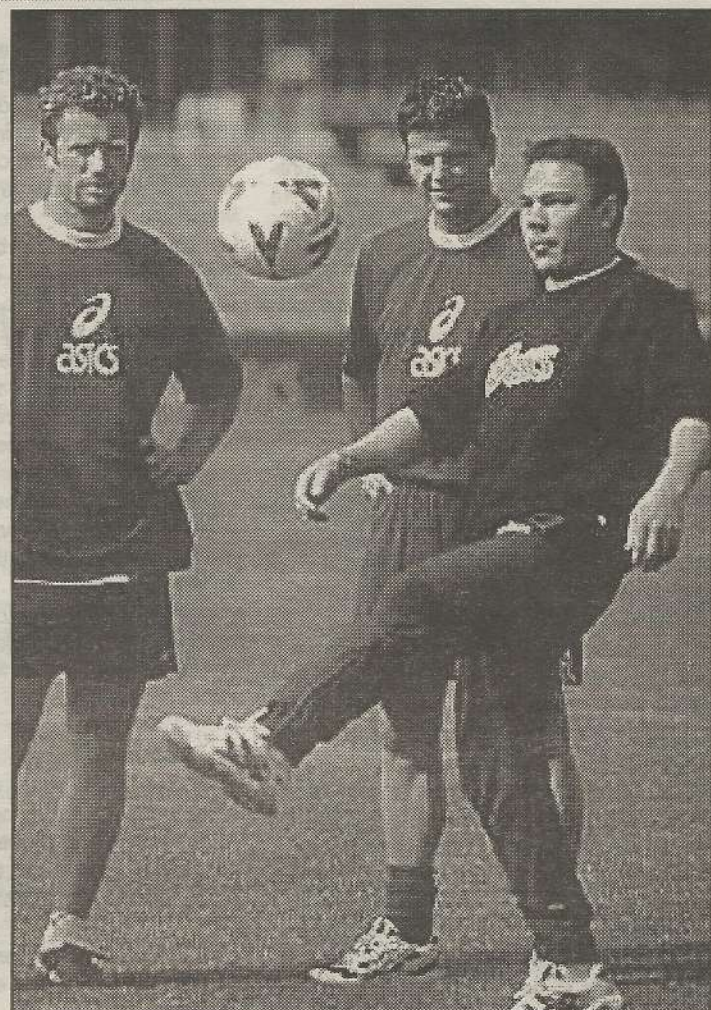
The club's motto is 'The Power and the Passion'.

The Power will launch its strip and major sponsor on Tuesday September 21. There will also be a community launch the following day.

KOSTYA TSZYU: PARRAMATTA POWER'S NUMBER ONE SEASON TICKET HOLDER



WBC World Super Lightweight Champion Kostya Tszyu meets Power captain Richard 'The Plesamachine' Plesa after the champion boxer was presented with the club's Number One Season Ticket Holder membership. Tszyu showed himself to be a handy soccer player at the recent Soccer Expo. Season tickets for 99/2000 are now on sale at Power's office. Call 9683 8102



JEWELL BRITANNIA

CARLTON'S BRIT PACK SET TO RULE?

By Greg Blake

Sporting an infectious grin and the cheeky cockiness of a teenager, 30-year-old midfielder Stuart Slater has become the third weapon in Carlton's new wave of imported British armory.

In what is a less than thinly disguised attempt to tap into the long dormant support base of British ex-pats in Melbourne, Slater joins Scots Dave McPherson and Mike Conroy as the marquee men for the Blues in what is, very much, a make or break season for a club whose ambitions have been near drowned in the wake of the hugely successful Perth Glory and Northern Spirit.

Both Slater and his new club are keen to dismiss any suggestions that Carlton's efforts to lure the so-called ageing professionals is a dangerous throw-

"If he was two or three we would have to start looking at putting him in school back home, so the timing was right.

"It's an exciting time for me. (Coach) Stuart Munro's been fantastic, (General Manager) Lou Sticca's been fantastic and I'm just looking forward to the season.

"The ideas that the club and coach have got appeal to me enormously."

After crashing out of the finals' race with a run of eleven losses in their last 13 games in 98/99 the on-field prognosis for Carlton appears to have improved markedly in the close-season.

The imports aside, Carlton has picked up the mercurial John Markovski and big Craig Deans from Perth, Adelaide City's David Terminello, Brisbane's Andy Packer and the usual array of promising youngsters from feeder clubs.

Lapsansky is confident that the new blood will provide the mix to push the club back towards those lofty grand final heights of 1997/98.

"I really think we'll do very well this year - I know we'll do well," says Lapsansky.

"Guys like McPherson really lift the bar for everyone.

"The way he trains, the way he approaches everything about his football is great for the young boys.

"They get the chance to see what professional soccer is all about. David is just a fantastic man."

Everyone, Lapsansky says is also impressed by new coach Stuart Munro, who has skipped from Sydney United and Gippsland in consecutive seasons before landing the Carlton appointment.

Munro believes Carlton's revival will be led by what he considers to be a substantial up-grading of the playing staff.

"Already I've bought in about nine players to the club, which was required," Munro explained.

"Experienced players were needed by the club, I think even Eddie (Krnecic) was saying that and I don't know why it wasn't done at the time.

"I watched maybe the last twelve of Carlton's games last season and I realized certain aspects of the team needed to be changed.

"A few players had left the club and they hadn't really been replaced and I thought experience-wise they were struggling as well.

"I think I've picked up a good mix of guys who'll do really well for the club and I'm very happy with the balance of the squad I've got now."

Munro is aware of the fine balance his coaching must strike between producing an entertaining football team and achieving results.

"You've got to admit that the first season for Carlton were in existence they were one of the most entertaining teams in the league but they never came through the turnstiles," he mused.

"Then you've got to ask what else is there, apart from what happens on the pitch.

"It's always the same. It doesn't matter what team it is, entertainment and

results are what they want to see.

"But Carlton gave them that in their first season and they never came out in the hundreds of thousands.

"My job is to continue the sort of success they had in their first year and try to remain entertaining and then it's up to the club off the field to get themselves sorted out.

"Winning and being entertaining is a big part of being successful but the club itself has got to do its part in drumming up some interest.

"We can only do it on the pitch and the club itself has got to market the team as well as it can."

The domino effect created by the appointment of Munro might well be the saving grace for a Carlton club long on ambition two years ago but now looking for straws to clutch at in a bid to merely survive in an AFL-dominated marketplace.

Munro, lured from Gippsland Falcons to replace Eddie Krnecic, was once a teammate of McPherson and it was as much Munro's personal influence as any other factor, which convinced the 27-times capped Scottish International to move down under.

Signing McPherson helped lure Conroy and Slater, with Carlton now hoping to turn those signings into the type of box office success enjoyed by Olympic Park co-tenants Melbourne Storm.

The second year NRL expansion team averaged in excess of 11,000 to home games, a figure Carlton believes is attainable in the long-term.

General Manager Lou Sticca admits that Carlton paid "over the odds" to snare the British trio, in the hope that

the outlay will be an investment in the club's future rather than yet another costly failure for a club finding its feet under new management.

"One of the things we pushed at Carlton with the league was to increase the visa vacancies from three to four so we could bring out quality players from overseas to add something that is lacking in Australian Soccer at the moment, which is star appeal," Sticca explained.

"Certainly we've had to break the previous budgets to accommodate these players and I would say that they would be in the top two or three paid in the country.

"But we do feel that the investment will be justified.

"The spin-off effect of bringing people like Dave (McPherson) to the club and the amount of interest we are getting on places like the Internet and from local Scottish Supporters groups and fans overseas has been phenomenal.

"From my point of view it is a deliber-



ate play to market the club (to a wider audience).

"A club like Carlton being seen to be able to bring players like Dave McPherson will open up the opportunities not just for Carlton but for other clubs to bring out name players from overseas.

"And if we are expecting so much young talent overseas, we need to be importing talent to counter the effect."



Stuart Slater ... is not here for a holiday, he wants the title this season.

back to the days when Australian domestic football became a lucrative haven for British hacks and has-beens.

Slater might well have been lining up for Watford in 1999/2000, the club he helped launch back into the English premiership last season, yet he appears to be enthused about his new surrounds. There is no doubting the impression he has left already on his long-established teammates.

"He's good, very good," 128 game Carlton veteran Lupo Lapsansky said of Slater after just a couple of training runs.

"You can just tell that he has a touch of class."

"At age thirty I still think I've got a lot to offer," says Slater.

"I've come from a club that's been promoted to the premiership and there was a lot of other offers, some from abroad.

"There was just some appeal about coming to Australia; the language is the same and I know we will be settled here and once you are settled you can enjoy your football.

"I still think I have three or four good years yet and although I had a couple of offers from clubs back home in the second or third division, I thought this was a great opportunity.

"With a little boy six months old I thought that if there was a time to do this it would have to be now.



Carlton's Soccerro Simon Colosimo. When he returns the side will be even stronger.

Sticca and Munro have paid particular credit to McPherson for his efforts to assist the Blues off the playing arena.

"From the minute he landed in the country has been the consummate professional," said Sticca.

"Everything he said he would do he has done and then more and the amount of requests we have had to visit schools has been remarkable and from that point of view he has been fantastic.

"You bring a player of the standard of McPherson into the club and it rubs off," says Munro.

Already I've seen a huge difference in the likes of Andrew Marth and Lupo (Lapsansky) in a short period of time.

"It makes them think 'well here's a guy who has played international level against top quality opposition and he's prepared to come to Carlton and it makes them think 'well I'm really going to go for it.'

"We mean business this season and they want to be part of it."

McPherson himself is enthusiastic about the challenge facing Carlton and the part he can play in shoring up the future of the club.

Continued next page

THE PRODIGY!

Last week Inside Soccer's Mark Fisher spoke with teenage Melbourne Knights sensation Hrvoje Matkovic (pictured right). Inside Soccer believes he could be the next 'big thing' to come out of Somers Street. Here is part two of that interview ...

Q. What are your hopes as a player for season 1999/2000?

Well, I hope to play for the full 90 minutes each game of the season, and

I've set myself a goal-scoring target as well.

Q. Who will you be particularly keen to play against, and why?

Most probably the whole South Melbourne squad, I'd love to score a goal against them.

Q. Considering his lofty reputation at Somers Street, your coach Joe Biskic commands respect or demands respect as a coach ... or maybe both?

Maybe a bit of both. We have to

respect Joe for what he has been through and what he has done for Melbourne Knights; we'll do it for him as well as for the club. Everyone respects him.

Q. I understand you are completing Year 12 at the Catholic Regional College, Sydenham in Melbourne's north-west. How are you finding juggling football commitments with completing your secondary schooling?

In my case it is not that hard. I concentrate well on soccer. My friends do help me out with homework and so on.

Q. Do you get to socialise with other members of the Knights squad outside of club commitments?

I communicate mostly with players who are coming up through the youth team - other guys the same age mainly. I do not regularly go out - I'm committed to football and in my leisure time watch tapes. I know that all the hard work is going to pay off in the long run and then I'll be able to enjoy it more.

Q. So much of the football we see on television of course comes to us from England and Italy. I must say that I am a proud Arsenal supporter. Do you regularly follow any foreign football teams?

Yeah, I follow Manchester United. But I also follow the Croatian League, and I want it to rise up (in profile). I like Croatia Zagreb, and it's a big feeder club to other leagues, with exports like Boban.

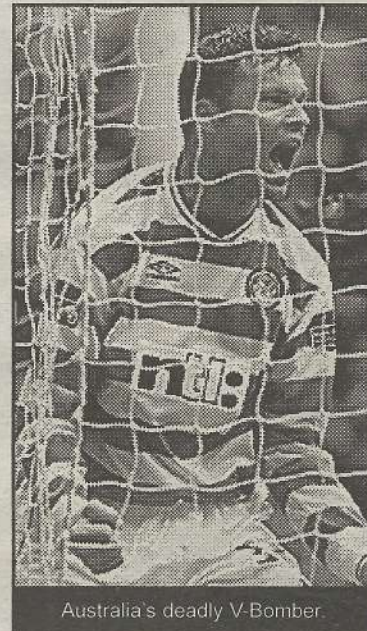
Q. Now to your future aspirations as a player. Where would you like to be in five years time in football and outside of it?

Outside of the game I wouldn't mind becoming a physical education teacher. Regarding football, I'll be 23 by that stage, so I'd like to be overseas. If I had the choice, I'd like to play in England. If I went to Croatia, I wouldn't mind playing for Zagreb, because my father was there, as was my grandfather, so it would be traditional for me to play there, or perhaps with Vukovar, where we are originally from.

Q. Finally, as we all know the Knights have produced one of the superstars of Australian football in Mark Viduka. What are your own impressions of the "V-Bomber"?

I have met him -- I believe he is a great striker, but his coach has to know how to use him. He is not a big runner, he's better around the box, and his big advantage is his height - he is good in the air.

Hrvoje, I appreciate you taking time out from exam preparation to speak today. I wish you all the best in the coming season with the Melbourne Knights.



Australia's deadly V-Bomber

JEWELL BRITANNIA CARLTON'S BRIT PACK SET TO RULE?

Continued from page eight

"That is part of the challenge for me being here, it is to go to these supporter bases and generate some interest and get people to come to the ground," the lanky Scot explained.

"To be honest I am a bit disappointed with the reaction of a lot of Victorian Soccer supporters.

"Their reaction tends to be that they are glad you're over here, but to actually getting them interested in coming to game is another story."

At the end of the day, much of the club's success will still come down to what the combination of old faces and imports can produce on the paddock.

Slater was almost incredulous when his footballing ambitions came into question.

"I've played the majority of my career at the highest level, I've been transferred for big money and played for big clubs," he explained.

"Had I have come from a second or third division club ten people could have questions about coming here and making easy money.

"But it's not just about money because I could probably be making more money back home, it was just the challenge of a new country.

"My ambition is to win something here ... definitely."

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ANGE POSTECOGLOU

One of the genuinely big clubs of the League -- South Melbourne, one of only three remaining founder clubs -- had regularly underperformed until recent years, with internal strife often a factor.

Coaches came, promising the success-starved fans an end to the silverware drought, but few chose the time of their tenure's end, forced out by the relentless -- sometimes unrealistic -- drive for honours.

Through a long period of this history, current coach Ange Postecoglou was a key, if low-profile player, mostly as a left-back, and then from the young age of 22, as team captain.

Now coach of the club for the last three years, and with two winning Grand Final appearances and a remarkable home record of just one loss in two years, Postecoglou's profile has increased to the level he was one of four locally-based coaches to have been a contender for the vacant national team coaching job.

Inside Soccer's Alan Clark caught up with Postecoglou just as South was making its final preparations for the biggest tournament any Australian football team had yet encountered: the Oceania qualifiers to determine the team to advance to the World Club Championship in Brazil next year.

Tomorrow (Sep 15) South will be in Fiji preparing for the first of three Group games against clubs from American Samoa, Tahiti, and Vanuatu, and with luck

This is an opportunity for this group of players who are friends ... They can share that as a group and have it for the rest of their lives, so to me it's going to be an even more special experience for them.

a semi-final, and then the Final: five games in ten days. Postecoglou had just returned from a reconnaissance trip to Fiji

humid and the ground so hard, it's not conducive to good football.

"The one advantage we have -

cant part of the tournament. If we've got an advantage it could be that. Most of the other clubs will have a smaller number of good players who'll need to carry most of the workload, so by the time they get to a semi-final or the Final, they may be a little bit jaded. We should be able to have a fairly fresh team -- I'll be rotating the players to make sure that if we're in the Final no-one has played more than three games."

One player certain to make the squad is Kiwi international Vaughan Coveny.

Coveny has only recently returned from the FIFA Confederations Cup in Mexico, which pitted New Zealand against Brazil, Germany, and the USA.

I asked Postecoglou how important is it for a player to have the experience of playing in a tournament like that.

"Vaughny played against Germany and Brazil in front of huge crowds at a great stadium in a serious football country. He loved it. He was talking about what a great experience it was just to see players of that calibre at close quarters and play against them.

"To me the Club Championship

will be an even better experience. Sometimes you go away with your national team - you're representing your country, but you're playing with ten other blokes that you don't know very well and who you don't really have close relationships with.

"So the experience tends to be a bit more individual. You think -- that was great -- and you come home and you talk to your mates who you play with at club level about it.

"This is an opportunity for this group of players who are friends, to go over as a group, and share in the experience, so they don't have to wait 'til they come back, or call back -- they'll be on the pitch together. They can share that as a group and have it for the rest of their lives, so to me it's going to be an even more special experience for them.

"Those opportunities are rare, particularly for club footballers here in Australia."

South qualified for the OFC tournament by winning last year's Grand Final, and so becoming Champions of Australia. But the club's Grand Final ...

Continued on facing page



Back-to-back for South in 1999. Coach Postecoglou is far right wearing the suit and that rarely seen smile!

where he was checking things out when he spoke to me in his office at the picturesque Bob Jane Stadium in Albert Park.

I first asked about the conditions he will encounter during the tournament in Fiji.

"The conditions will be very difficult. The playing surfaces are sub-standard to say the least. The conditions are very

greater skill, better technique, players of high quality -- those things almost get evened out because of the conditions we're going to be playing under.

"There is no style of game or system you can play that's going to overcome a poor-quality pitch.

"The team that has the greater will to win will get through. If I thought there was a style of game that would help eliminate the conditions, then we'd try and do that, but I don't think that's the case.

"It's a lifetime opportunity. I said to the players, even if they go overseas, they'll never play in a tournament as big as (the one we have a chance to play in). Provided we get through Fiji, it'll be the highlight of their footballing careers. You can't get any higher than that, to be able to play a Manchester United, a Real Madrid, a Vasco de Gama, in the world's biggest club tournament in Brazil.

"Unfortunately, all we can do (in Fiji) is stuff it up. We're expected to get through this qualifying phase. We're in a situation where we've got nothing to win really. If we get through, everyone's expected us to get through. If we don't get through, everyone'll be saying we blew it.

"We're allowed to take twenty players over, and our twenty will be a very talented group. All twenty will play a signifi-

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THE YOUNG COACH WITH THE MASTER'S TOUCH

preparations were rent asunder as a result of the tragic accident which befell midfielder David Clarkson's daughters the day before the team was due to fly to Sydney for a crucial Finals match. Clarkson -- a popular figure at the club -- had to withdraw from the team as his daughters were admitted into intensive care.

No coach can factor such a personal and team-blow into his plans, and no coach can forecast the effects this would have on team morale.

South Melbourne were defending a narrow 2-1 win from the home leg and would have no room for manoeuvre in the return. A single United goal without reply would give South Melbourne a difficult path to the Grand Final.

I had previously interviewed Clarkson for Inside Soccer and sought his feelings during this period, but now I wanted to know how Postecoglou and the team managed to get through this difficult time.

Postecoglou started off by telling me he was recently involved in a coaching course at which other NSL coaches were present which covered all the technical aspects of coaching, and on those criteria, was a very successful course, and he went on: "The most important thing about being a coach is thinking on your feet and reacting to situations that you don't see coming."

"We were getting ready to play Sydney United away, my plans had been made about what we were going to do, I'm driving down to training and I get a phone call from Paul Trimboli who tells me that David Clarkson's daughters have been run over."

"It was a huge blow -- I couldn't think straight, how are the players going to react? So I went into the dressing-rooms and just told the players."

They saw I was devastated and they were devastated as well. We were in shock for the whole training session, but I think we needed to do that.

If I'd just come in and said 'Well this has happened to Clarky, but we've got to put it to one side because we've got an important game to play tomorrow' I think the players wouldn't have had a chance to go through that period of disbelief and talk it over with each other.

"(It gave them the opportunity to) all come to the position in their own good time about the game still going on, rather than me forcing them."

"We had a shell-shocked training run, and then we went up to Sydney where it was clear that Clarky wasn't going to play. I only mentioned it a couple of times, but I knew he was in their minds."

"In the end it proved to be an extra motivation for the team, but it's so hard to have a set formula for things. You just try to read a situation to the best of your ability."

"It was a very stressful time. You get supporters saying 'Well, you've got to do it for Clarky', but it's not that simple,

because David's got personal relationships with all those players and they all know his kids. They're all thinking: 'Who cares whether we win or lose? Let's just make sure his kids are alright'. To the players' credit, I think (they decided) they had the opportunity to give Clarky something to look forward to -- a chance to play in a Grand Final -- and Clarky certainly felt better when he came down here to train again."

South earned its fourth Grand Final win subsequently, all four of which Postecoglou has been involved in as a player or coach. I asked Postecoglou if a Grand Final win is better as a player or as a coach.

"The first Championship came in my first year (1984), and to be honest, I don't remember much of it -- it's a bit of a blur. I took it pretty much for granted -- it was my first year as a player -- you win a Championship and you think you're going to win ten or twelve in your career."

"By the time the second one came around (1990/91), it was seven years later."

"I was captain of the side, and that one meant a lot, because (since the first) we'd gone close quite a few times, without even getting to a Grand Final again. So when that one came around, I really appreciated it as a player, and enjoyed the second one."

"On the coaching side of things, there was another seven year gap before (South) got to a Grand Final again. I'd been involved in a lot of Preliminary Final losses so there was a lot of heart-ache around the club."

"When we won that one (1997/98), I just felt a huge sense of achievement because you know how hard it is to get."

"Back-to-back (in 1998/99) was just a relief."

"I think I've enjoyed the ones as a coach more because you get to reflect on what the team and individual players are achieving -- you tend to feel responsible for all their happiness, whereas as a player you tend to just focus on yourself."

"So I've enjoyed the two as a coach more -- as a player you just tend to go a bit crazy (upon winning a Championship), but as a coach I've just sat back and taken in the moment. I certainly remember them a lot more clearly than the ones where I was a player."

I wanted to know if Postecoglou -- clearly a favourite of the Bob Jane faithful because of his long time as a player, and now the most successful coach in their NSL history -- feels a special bond at South Melbourne. His answer surprised me.

"I feel very strongly about South Melbourne because I've been here my whole life, but I think sometimes people can get carried away. There's no doubt that's one of the reasons I'm close to the club is that it's a successful club. I'm loyal to a certain degree, but if this club wasn't successful during my playing career -- and wasn't one of the leading clubs in the

country, then I probably would have moved on to one of the leading clubs."

"All players want to play for one of the big clubs, and coach the big clubs."

I was fortunate that I started at a big club and so there was no need to move."

"The only responsibility I feel is being the coach of one of the biggest clubs in the country -- it doesn't really go beyond that. I try not to let it go beyond that actually."

Postecoglou's success in bringing home two Championships in the last two years, and getting just one game away from the Grand Final in his first year as a South coach could well have come to nothing had South acted with the capriciousness it earlier often had following Postecoglou's first five games of the 1997/98 season. As the new coach, taking the reins from Frank Arok late the previous year, Postecoglou's side was winless after five, and the fickle home supporters' mutterings were being more loudly expressed.

Given that he had so much experience of the ways of South Melbourne, I asked him how close he was to having his career end before it had properly started.

"There's no doubt there was pressure there, but because I knew the club pretty well, I knew all it would take to turn it around was a couple of good results, so I tended to try and concentrate on that."

"I was confident in the people who had appointed me, particularly the President George Vasilopoulos, and all the Board."

"I felt that they would give me a



South Melbourne's outstanding coach Ange Postecoglou. Tomorrow his side leaves for the vital Oceania qualifiers for the World Club Championships in Fiji.

decent whack at it, and I didn't think I'd be gone after five or six games, but the pressure was building and we were next to play Newcastle at home in the sixth game. I remember leaving home and thinking: 'Well, if we don't get a result today, things are going to get pretty dodgy'."

"We played pretty poorly actually, but Ivan Kelic got a scrambled goal for us and we won by a goal, and we never looked back."

"Maybe another club would have pulled the trigger before that and who knows what the outcome would have been? I would have been out of a job and my coaching career would have been ended."

"The club probably saw something in me that was worth taking the gamble on, and they took that gamble regardless of the results."

"I was always confident that once we got a result and a bit of a run, it would be OK. I was never in any doubt that we'd turn it around, and that at the end of that season we'd be playing in the Finals -- I was super-confident of that."

From then on, Postecoglou's run was remarkable.

In part two of the Postecoglou interview, he tells Inside Soccer of his reaction to the news that Frank Farina had been chosen for the national coaching job for which Postecoglou was also an aspirant.

And he explains what he's learnt from the revolving door of South Melbourne coaches over the years, and what his ambition was when first appointed to the South Melbourne hot-seat.

INSIDE JUNIOR SOCCER

Ram

BILL TURNER CUP



St Augustine 'keeper Luke Brown(right) ... one of the stars of the Bill Turner Cup.

BILL TURNER CUP

GRAND FINAL:	
Figtree High School, Wollongong	4 (Luke Russell 5, Bradd Grimson 16, 54, Adam Pazitnaj 50)
All Saints College St Peters, Maitland	1 (Michael Ryan 1)
THIRD PLACE PLAY-OFF:	
St Augustines, Cairns	4 (Matthew Baldizzone 42, 53, 58, Jurgen Westera 49)
Pennant Hills High School, Sydney	1 (Ben Pike 16)
FIRST SEMI-FINAL:	
All Saints College St Peters, Maitland	2 (Thomas Libbesson 1, 44)
St Augustines, Cairns	1 (Jurgen Westera 45)
SECOND SEMI-FINAL:	
Figtree High School, Wollongong	2 (Daniel Ratajkoski 24, Bradd Grimson 35)
Pennant Hills High School, Sydney	0

FIGTREE TURNER CUP CHAMPIONS

Figtree 4 ASC St Peters 1

By Greg Danvers

There were 579 at the start and by Tuesday, September 7, only four High School teams were left standing in the twenty first Bill Turner Cup.

The torrential rain in the Hunter Valley caused the postponement of the semi-finals, set down for the Tuesday evening, until Wednesday morning.

The grand final was a classic match which had it all, great skills, fair play, five goals - each one a gem, end to end football and great atmosphere.

Figtree High School, from Wollongong, ran out 4-1 winners over All Saints College St Peters of Maitland reversing the 1-0 win by St Peters in 1988.

Anyone with their head down in the opening minute would have missed one of the quickest goals in the action packed match.

Newcastle Breakers under-15 stars Joshua Castillo and Thomas Libbesson worked a set move from the kick-off to set up Michael Ryan's 11th second strike into the back of the net setting the crowd on fire and St Peters to a one goal lead.

Castillo pushed a long ball wide and deep with Libbesson working hard to gain possession, quickly crossing into the six yard box for Ryan to score.

Figtree negated the early goal of St Peters four minutes later through Luke Russell. From a goal mouth scramble Russell equalised from close range and from there the match settled into more controlled passages of play.

Bradd Grimson gave the visitors a 2-1 advantage in the 16th minute, the first of two well executed goals. St Peters had broken away down the centre of the park only to have a pass go astray. Figtree were quick to take possession and the ball was delivered to the feet of Grimson, and working his way into the

penalty box struck the ball past St Peters 'keeper Shannon Szymec.

St Peters went close to equalising seven minutes from the break after Castillo and Libbesson again weaved their magic. Castillo crossing for Libbesson to get a free header on goal but a diving save by Figtree 'keeper Marshall Lammers denying the equaliser.

The second half started as an arm wrestle with both sides trying to, but not, dominating play. Grimson was penalised inside the box for a hand ball after a 35 metre dead ball strike by Castillo.

Libbesson's penalty shot, in the 48th minute, going firmly to the right but close to the 'keeper who again denied St Peters the chance to get back in the match.

Daniel MacDonald put the match beyond doubt with a cross to an unmarked Adam Pazitnaj who calmly slotted home Figtree's third goal two minutes later.

Castillo, with an open goal,

shot from the edge of the box only to see the ball rebound off the far post and the chance to reduce the gap.

Grimson snuffed out any hope of St Peters snatching a late win with a well weighted chip over the 'keeper several minutes later from 35 metres.

On the full-time whistle the vocal Figtree crowd went wild and the curtain came down on the Bill Turner Cup for another year.

There was accolades all-round but the comment that sticks in my mind was 'cream always rises to the top' such was the standard of play at Jack McLaughlan Oval last Wednesday night.

"This is the second time I have been to a (Bill Turner Cup) final," Figtree coach David Denmead said.

"In 1988 we played St Peters and they won one nil. We have turned that around so I am glad to get back here and get some revenge for that one.

"I have enjoyed the Cup and it is a great experience for the boys. I have been involved in a number of school soccer competitions and this (the Bill Turner Cup) is by far the best organised, the best supported and all schools sectors can be involved.

"A lot of these players play with clubs, they are representative players, they play with NSL junior clubs but they don't come across the range of competition that they get in this Cup.

"The standard is high, particularly in the later rounds, and you do meet the cream of the under-15's soccer players in this part of the world."

St Augustines Cairns, the team that will have travelled 6300 kilometres in one week by the time they get home, defeated Pennant Hills High 4-1 in the third place play-off.

Matthew Baldizzone scored a hat-trick with team-mate Jurgen Westera adding the extra whilst Ben Pike scored for Pennant Hills.

OTHER TOUR DATES
FA Cup Round 1
Premier League
Nationwide League
28 Oct to
3 Nov 1999

Manchester United
Premier League
Feb 2000

Premier League
Champions League
Nationwide League
6 March to
12 March 2000

Premier League
Nationwide League
FA Cup Matches
30 March to
5 April 2000

Premier League
Nationwide League
20 April to
26 April 2000

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BILL TURNER CUP



THE SEMI FINALS STORY

By Greg Danvers

In the first semi final St Peters College of Maitland won the battle of the saints when it narrowly beat St Augustine of Cairns 2-1.

The match was won in the first 47 seconds when Maitland All Saints College - St Peters' Thomas Libbesson worked a Jacob Pridue through ball into the penalty box. Having only the 'keeper to beat Libbesson let a right foot drive rocket beyond the diving Luke Brown.

St Peters led 1-0 at the break but it was Libbesson again who added the second goal, from the penalty spot, in the 44th minute. St Augustine's Liam Froggatt had brought down Libbesson inside the penalty area with the referee having no hesitation in pointing to the spot.

From the kick-off St Augustine's Brady Ewen-Smith slotted a ball through for striker Alex Petrou to shoot across the goal mouth past 'keeper Shannon Szmynek, with Jurgen Westera on hand to side foot home.

In the second semifinal Wollongong's Figtree High School were just too strong across the park for the much smaller Pennant Hills outfit scoring a goal in each half to secure a grand final berth.

Figtree were unlucky not to be in front in the 23rd minute after midfielder Michael Crooks sent Daniel Ratajowski goal bound but his shot was parried by Pennant Hills 'keeper David Ball.

Ball was not as fortunate a minute later when Ratajowski lobbed the defence and the ball, with a lot of back-spin, sat up well for him to volley past Ball.

Figtree's 1-0 lead at the break soon doubled. Five minutes into the second half Bradd Grimson won a one-on-one against Ball and slotted the ball past him allowing his team to advance to the grand final.

Pennant Hills didn't give in and threw everything at Figtree for the last 15 minutes but were unable to finish when in front of goal.

Talent scouts should write down the name of Alex Petrou of Cairns in the diaries. This young lad has the markings of someone special.

Petrou has balance, speed, skill and self belief. A player with vision, toughness and endurance.

In his team's 2-1 semi-final loss to St Peters Alex Petrou polled well in the Austcraft Medals Bill Turner Cup Star

Player Award and backed that up with another great effort in the third place play-off against Pennant Hills won 4-1 by St Augustine of Cairns.

Those two matches were enough for him to finish one point in front of his closest rival to win the coveted star player award.

Alex Petrou is also mature enough to realise that he would not achieve such an award without a good team around him.

"The team played really well in all our games," Alex Petrou said after receiving the Austcraft Medals Bill Turner Cup Star Player Award.

"The whole team put in a really great effort and I am surprised that I got the award."

Petrou is keen to continue with a career in soccer and would not look out of place in an NSL youth team.

"I would like to go further in soccer. I like playing hard competitive soccer, just getting there (to the next level) is the hard thing but to do it would be great."

The organisation of an event as big as the Bill Turner

The 1999 Bill Turner Cup was, once again, a tremendous success thanks to the many volunteers who have helped organise it. The Bill Turner Cup is a tremendous asset to football and it would be wonderful if it could expand to cover the whole of Australia. To do so the tournament needs a major sponsor for next year. The opportunity is ripe for a forward looking company to tap into a very large market that would bring tremendous benefit to its products and enormous goodwill amongst the community.

WANTED: A MAJOR SPONSOR

Call Bill Turner on (02) 4950 8588.

Cup requires a lot of assistance from the broad community and this year, in particular, was no exception. A number of individuals and groups deserve gold medals for their contribution to the success of this year's tournament.

THE FIRST GOLD CARD goes to the corporate community of Cairns for their financial assistance to get St Augustines, 6300 kilometres return, to the Hunter Valley for the Bill Turner Cup finals series.

The team has travelled over 11,000 kilometres in 11 weeks.

Trinity Mobil Distributors chipped in with a fuel card for the trip valued at around \$3000. The Cairns RSL threw in \$1000 and members of the business community donated around \$3000 in \$250 and \$500 donations.

THE SECOND GOLD CARD goes to the Figtree supporters. After a phone call from team management with the winning result of the second semi-

final the 'all aboard' cry went out and the bus made the five hour trek to Jack McLaughlan Oval for the final and they came in numbers and at full volume.

THE THIRD GOLD CARD goes to Willa and Brian Merchant for washing and drying the Figtree strip for them between the semi-final and grand-final. The Figtree management were

As is the custom each year, the Edgeworth Eagles Soccer Club believed it was their civic duty to provide, at no cost to the Bill Turner Cup committee, their ground and facilities including the lights for the benefit of Soccer not

only in Northern NSW but Soccer everywhere.

As well, the City of Lake Macquarie Mayor, Councillor John Kilpatrick welcomed the schools and support staff to Lake Macquarie last Tuesday at a Civic Reception in the Council Chambers for the twenty first Bill Turner Cup.

Ironically two Lake

semi-finals were deferred until the next day.

Bill Turner received his second twenty first birthday key last Wednesday night on the pitch at Jack McLaughlan Oval in front of around 1500 soccer buffs who came to watch and play in the twenty first Bill Turner Cup.

One of his fellow organisers Noel Cocking decided that being the 21st Bill Turner Cup there should be a light hearted presentation to Bill. So what do you give to someone turning 21? The key of course.

I asked Bill how it felt to be 21 again after the throngs were filing out of Jack McLaughlan Oval having just witnessed a truly entertaining and skilful game of junior soccer.

"Well I think the big surprise to me was when Terry Hampton held up the key for twenty one years of age," Bill Turner commented.

"Never did I believe anyone would think of doing something like that but Noel Cocking, one of our executive members, actually put it together and had the idea. He is full of ideas and that one really surprised me.

"It is true we (the Bill Turner Cup and the committee) are twenty one and when you think of it it is not a bad effort because we have been working hard and when you've got to do it without money, without sponsorship it just means so much."

Bill Turner has not only worked long and hard but has also sunk a hell of a lot of his personal time and at times considerable amounts of his own finances into the project. That his peers paid a tribute to his efforts last Wednesday night was not only fitting but thoroughly well deserved.



All Saints College St Peters Maitland - losing finalists

SPIRIT OPENS ITS ARMS TO SYDNEY



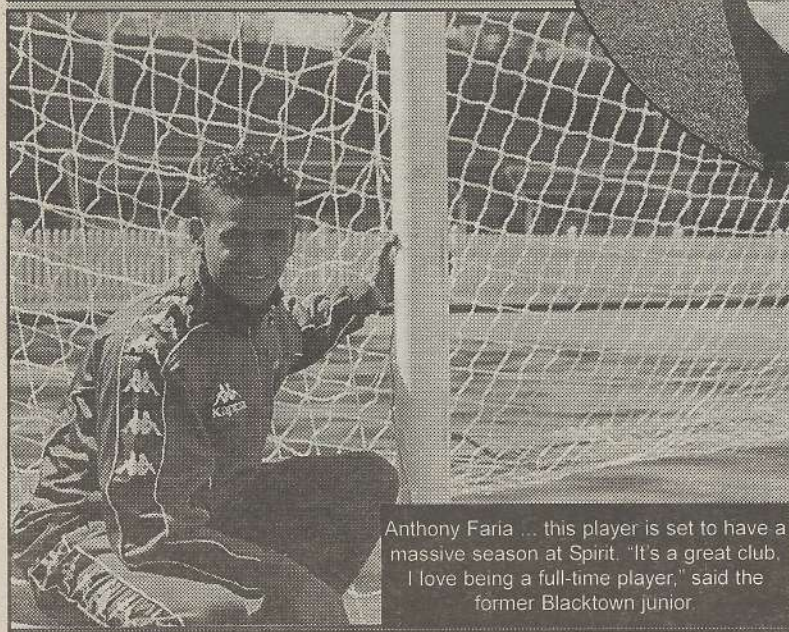
The fans turned up early to be a part of a great day



Brazil v Spirit? Who cares, these kids had a great time.



Sibling Spirit



Anthony Faria ... this player is set to have a massive season at Spirit. "It's a great club. I love being a full-time player," said the former Blacktown junior.

**PHOTOGRAPHY
BY
AIDAN
ORMOND**



"Son, this is a soccer ball. It's your best friend," says Spirit's Michael Cunico.

On a delightful Spring day in Sydney, Northern Spirit held their annual Open Day last Sunday. Kids, Mums and Dads and fans turned out in their thousands for the coaching sessions with the players, the celebrity match, featuring Rugby League legend Cliff Lyons (whose son plays at Spirit) and a penalty shootout with 'Hendo' and John Perosh. The players signed autographs and met new and old fans. And as Robbie Slater said "it's great to see so many fans out here."



The MIX FM promotional girls were on hand to help promote the event.



Some of the kids involved with the Spirit coaching clinic on the hallowed turf of North Sydney



Hendo meets the next generation of keepers.

VICTORIA STATE LEAGUE REVIEW 1999

COMPILED BY
KEVIN CHRISTOPHER
PICTURES BY
MICHAEL CRONIN

ST ALBANS

Position: 7th Points: 36
Top Scorer: Harry Karl 22

Thank God for Harry Karl, should be the chant coming from Churchill Reserve over sum-



Harry Karl ... his goals saved the Saints



mer, with the ex-Knights striker scoring half his team's goals in a virtuoso season in which he scored against every other club in the league.

Hat-tricks against Altona Magic and Westvale boosted his season's tally to 22 and attracted the attention of Marconi, subsequently signing a three-year deal.

The wider picture wasn't so rosy for a club which pushed Bulleen all the way in last season's grand final. Steve Rastocic took over from Vlado Vanis and inherited the bulk of the 1998 squad but lasted just half a dozen matches before eventually being replaced by the affable Vid Horvat. A further run of five losses in six games didn't shake the faith of the club or Horvat and the Saints ended the season as one of the competition's form teams, despite a 1-5 final day loss at Green Gully.

Greg Saric provided the Saints with great drive and Joe Cuze and Damian Vojtek could well reappear at NSL level but, unless a replacement for Karl can be found, 2000 could be another year of struggle for the club.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Home	13	7	1	5	26	19	22
Away	13	4	2	7	18	22	14
Total	26	11	3	12	44	41	36

PRESTON



Warren Spink

Position: 3rd Points: 47
Top Scorer: Warren Spink 14

After guiding St Albans to the minor premiership last season, coach Vlado Vanis was coaxed over to Goodyear Stadium as the Lions go on searching for their first title since 1984.

Following on from last year's eighth placing, this year's third should satisfy the club although there will still be a feeling of what if.

It was a case of lions at home and pussies away early in the season, but a Warren Spink hat-trick at Port Melbourne in Round 11 signalled that Preston were serious contenders. They were still within two points of the leaders with eight rounds to play but a 0-2 home loss to Green Gully followed by a horror 0-4 home loss to Bentleigh, a fortnight later, had the fat lady practicing her scales.

Their early season inconsistency had returned and the chance to resurrect their fading hopes came with another home fixture against Port Melbourne, but a 0-2 loss hardly seemed to shatter the players and perhaps the hunger isn't quite there anymore for a few of the veterans. Lupce Acevski had a fine year in goal and Tony Ujgunovski also could develop into something as well, and if Josip Kozic can play at the peak of his form for the whole year then Preston might have the foundations of a new-look championship winning team.



Tony Ujgunovski ... amongst the goals this year.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Home	13	9	1	3	24	16	28
Away	13	6	1	6	26	21	19
Total	26	15	2	9	50	37	47

SOUTH DANDENONG

Position: 12th Points: 24
Top Scorer: Billy Wright, Nick Van Egmond, Reshat Mezensof - 7 each

A year to forget both on and off the field for the Albanian-backed club, although for a while it seemed as though they may just escape the drop.

A mid-season coaching change saw Fadil Muriqi make way for ex-Kiwi international Billy Wright and the team certainly took fewer steps backward



Billy Wright

under his control but by then most of the damage had been done.

Chris Roche had a fine year between the sticks and defensively they benefitted from the recruitment of Robert Runje but too often heads would drop when the team went behind, resulting in some terrible scorelines. Highlights were few but the 4-1 win at Melbourne Raiders mid-year stands out, as does the gutsy 4-2 win over Altona Magic which provided fresh hope of staying up, and the thrilling 4-3 win over high-flying Preston.

Beyond that however it was slim pickings, with too many players, especially in midfield, suffering from patchy form for the team to consistently worry opponents.

South Dandenong did finish on top of one table this year, however. Their 26 matches produced a total of 103 goals - a league high. For regular attenders at George Andrews Reserve the season may have ended in disappointment but it was certainly entertaining.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Home	13	3	3	7	23	31	12
Away	13	3	3	7	18	31	12

MELBOURNE RAIDERS

Position: 8th Points: 36
Top Scorer: Nick Cuculevski 10

When you've got a new stadium, new name and new coach you have the ingredients for a number of recipes. In the case of the Raiders they didn't quite come up with a four-course meal but they gave the paying customers the occasional feast, even if there was plenty to provide them with indigestion as well.

Never close enough to the leaders to be serious challengers, they nevertheless found themselves in fourth place at the half-way point and, in theory at least, in a position to push on and build on their fine start.

But an eight match winless streak, during which they tended to go through the

motions, meant the Raiders were suddenly just one point above the relegation zone with six matches to play. Wins over Westvale, Springvale and Sunshine allowed for easier breathing and a final placing of eighth should be considered fair value for their toil. Given the possibilities pre-season, toil was better than turmoil.

To be blunt, the squad was light on for talent when comparing it with the real championship contenders, although Nick Cuculevski had an excellent year and should poll well in the Gold Medal. Pino Corallo, recruited from South Dandenong, returned five goals but should have had a few more while the defence was like butter on occasions.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Home	13	6	2	5	19	19	20
Away	13	4	4	5	17	25	16
Total	26	10	6	10	36	44	36

VICTORIA STATE LEAGUE REVIEW 1999



Altona Magic ... one of their few moments of celebration

ALTONA MAGIC

Position: 10th Points: 31
Top Scorer: Toni Trifunov - 8

A disastrous season by the Magic's lofty standards, their worst since finishing eleventh in 1992, with the final 1999 insult delivered when Altona East finished above them. Coach Chris Taylor, brought in to replace the Green Gully-bound Ian Dobson, lasted just three matches before resigning.

Visa problems with Macedonian import players didn't help matters and



the Magic were rarely 'safe' and the fact they finished just one point clear of the drop says plenty about their season. John Sapazovski was a bright spot for the team, showing enough form to warrant trials with Gippsland Falcons, while

with fifteen goals conceded in the opening four games there was cause for real concern. But once new coach Zoran Trajcevski and the imports arrived it was all systems go with four straight wins and a surge into mid-table. With four clubs going down however

Toni Trifunov (8 goals) and Zoran Todorovski (6), also caught the eye.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Home	13	6	3	4	25	23	21
Away	13	2	4	7	11	24	10
Total	26	8	7	11	36	47	31

SPRINGVALE EAGLES

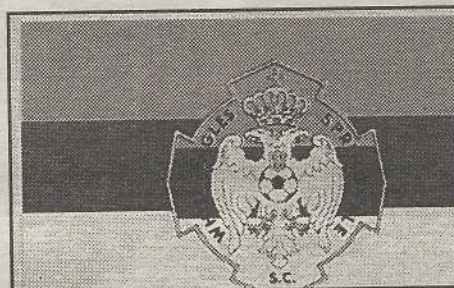
Position: 9th Points: 30
Top Scorer: Zlatko Mihaljovic - 11

A turbulent year for the White Eagles who now return to Division One after three years in the top flight. For a while it seemed as though Bobby McLaughlin - who replaced Milos Nasic mid-season - may work the miracle needed and lead Springvale to safety.

But the club were definitely affected by events in Europe, resulting in their round 5 home clash with South Dandenong being played behind closed doors at Fawkner, costing a club a small fortune at the gate and bar, and their misfortune continued on the field to the extent they were never out of the relegation zone longer than a week at a time.

Zlatko Mihaljovic (11 goals) returned from Gippsland Falcons and was a shining light in the season and Billy Armour (signed from relegated Moorabbin City) also proved to be an excellent acquisition. Eric Styczen, Igor Mandic and Jim

Gacovski were valuable contributors throughout the season but in the end there just wasn't enough depth in the squad to make a serious tilt at a mid-table position, with the mid-season loss of goalkeeper Robert Brian to Green Gully possibly proving decisive.



Springvale's Eric Styczen

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Home	13	5	3	5	18	17	18
Away	13	3	3	7	19	23	12
Total	26	8	6	12	37	40	30

WESTVALE

Position: 13th Points: 19
Top Scorer: Angie Goutzioulis - 11

Like Altona East, Westvale were in the Provisional League when the Premier League first kicked off in 1992, so just earning promotion should have been cause for celebration, although the well-financed club would no doubt beg to differ.

Had a poor start to the season and could manage just one win in their opening ten games, so by the time Mike Urukalo took over from Phil Stubbins he faced a massive task.

Although they started to convert narrow losses into draws, they simply didn't accumulate enough points to get out of the bottom four.

A mid-season revival sparked by the arrival of Sash Markovski from Preston produced just two losses in nine games but the wheels and axle fell off once relegation was inevitable and the late-season injury to top scorer Angie Goutzioulis was the final straw for the club which lost its last seven games, conceding 25 goals in the process.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Home	13	2	5	6	16	32	11
Away	13	2	2	9	15	37	8
Total	26	4	7	15	31	69	19

SUNSHINE

Position: 14th Points: 15
Top Scorer: Alfonso Opazo - 9

A real shocker from one of the league's traditional big guns and as the season drew to a close there were serious doubts about the future viability of the club.

Like Westvale, had a poor start and never recovered, with a 1-6 home defeat at the hands of South Dandenong way back in March providing conclusive proof that the Georgies were on their way to the first division.

The problems began when coach Anthony Cassar pursued a youth policy while the committee preferred experienced heads. Exit the coach after three rounds but by then the squad had been pruned and John Kanescoulis was forced to take on a young squad already deep in the relegation zone.

Anthony Magnacca returned from Canberra and provided one of the few highlights, while Alfonso Opazo was the only player to score more than three goals for the year.

Division One will be no picnic next season and we may not see Sunshine for a while unless significant resources both on and off the field can be acquired.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Home	13	4	1	8	15	34	13
Away	13	0	2	11	11	36	2
Total	26	4	3	19	26	70	15

ALTONA EAST

Position: 9th Points: 31
Top Scorer: George Angelos - 11

Just stayin up should be considered an outstanding achievement by a club with few stars but one of the most astute coaches in the league, Peter Ollerton. When the Premier League kicked off in 1992, Altona East were playing in the Provisional League, but a string of five promotions in seven seasons (and a change of home venue) saw the club playing Premier League soccer, and even winning their opening two matches.

But the party abruptly ended when the Phoenix could manage just two more wins in their next thirteen games, leading the way to a winter of frustration and a final day showdown with Springvale White Eagles. A 1-1 draw ensured survival but the telling result had come one week earlier with a tense 2-1 win at already relegated Westvale. Leading scorer George Angelos picked up both goals that night to finish the season with eleven, while Nick Papadopoulos (8) and Peter Groidis (4) were the only other players to score more than twice. Only Sunshine scored less goals for the season, but their defensive record was the best outside the top six with goalkeeper Sam Frangos an astute purchase. Despite beating Bulleen, Preston, Fawkner and St Albans during the year, the squad needs further depth before survival next season can be repeated.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Home	13	3	5	5	14	16	14
Away	13	5	2	6	15	22	17
Total	26	8	7	11	29	38	31

NSW YOUTH LEAGUES

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE

PRELIMINARY FINALS

G13 - The Wollongong Wolves hammered the Newcastle Breakers 4-1 in the Preliminary Final held at Valentine Park to earn the honour of playing the Blacktown City Demons.

The Demons went through the league unbeaten and it will therefore be a big upset if the Wolves can get anything out of the game.

G14 - The preliminary Final between Sydney United and Sydney Olympic was a close one, and it was Sydney Olympic who came away with a 1-0 win and a meeting with the Gladesville Hornsby Association in the Grand Final.

G15 - There was a thriller in the G15 Preliminary Final, with the match between the Southern Districts and Marconi Fairfield only being settled on penalties.

It was 2-2 at the end of normal time, and when extra time failed to provide a golden goal the game went to the dreaded spot kicks. It was just as close in the shoot-out too, with Marconi Fairfield eventually getting through 5-4 on penalties to secure a Grand Final spot against the Blacktown City Demons.

G16 - There was another close game in the G16 Preliminary Final too, as the Blacktown City Demons met the Newcastle Breakers. Sydney Olympic awaited the winners of this game, and it was the Demons who got through 1-0, but only after the game had been scoreless in normal time.

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE

GRAND FINALS

It was Grand Final day on Saturday at Melita Stadium for the Division One Youth League, and the games were close ones!

G13 - Illawarra had proved themselves the best team over the season, and they proved it again in the Grand Final over a solid Bankstown Association side.

The association team had finished some sixteen points behind their opponents during the regular season, but they made the Lions fight all the way before going down 1-0.

G14 - Penrith did magnificently well to get to the Grand Final after finishing in fourth place on the ladder, but their opponents Ryde City had been by far the best team all year and proved it again on the big occasion.

The Gunners came away with the trophy after a 2-0 win to complete a fine season for them.

G15 - Once again the team who dominated the division, this time AC United, came away with both top spot on the table and the Grand Final prize.

AC's opponents were the Bonnyrigg White Eagles who finished third on the ladder, but AC proved just too strong for their opponents, coming away with a 1-0 win.

G16 - The G16 age group provided another different winner, meaning four different clubs had picked up the four trophies on offer.

It was the top two who played off in the grand final, with the Bankstown Association going in as favourites against the Blacktown Association.

That favourite tag nearly counted for nothing in a great struggle, but it was the Bankstown Association who did eventually come away with the spoils after a 3-2 win.

GRAND FINAL WINNERS:

G13 - Illawarra Lions

G14 - Ryde City

G15 - AC United

G16 - Bankstown Association

CADET LEAGUE DIVISION ONE

PRELIMINARY FINALS

G11 - Sydney United awaited the winners of the Preliminary Final between Marconi Fairfield and Canterbury Marrickville, and while the Berries went into the game as favourites it was the Marconi Fairfield side who eventually earned that Grand Final spot.

The game finished 2-2 in normal time, and just when it looked like the game might be going to penalties Marconi Fairfield got the winner in extra time to give them a 3-2 win.

G12 - Marconi Fairfield made it a 'double' after seeing their G11 team march onto the Grand Final, as the G12 side also battled out a victory in the Preliminary Final.

They played Sydney United, and came away with a 2-1 win to secure the Grand Final spot.

CADET LEAGUE DIVISION TWO

GRAND FINALS

The Grand Finals of the Cadet League Division Two were held at Melita Stadium, and in both age groups the team who finished on top of the table also claimed the Grand Final prize.

In the G11 game the two teams who had proved themselves the best all year, Macquarie Sports and the Illawarra Lions clashed, and it was Macquarie Sports who came away with the honours after a 3-0 victory.

It was closer in the G12 game though, as CSI Schofields pushed the Stanmore Hawks all the way in a gutsy performance, before the class of the Hawks told out in a 1-0 victory.

GRAND FINAL WINNERS:

G11 - Macquarie Sports

G12 - Stanmore Hawks

FOXES OUTDO THE PIRATES IN FRONT OF LARGE CROWD

By Peter Georgaras

The Cumberland Foxes were crowned the 1999 South Australia Premier League Champions, when they defeated the Port Lion Pirates 1-0 in front of over 8,500 at Hindmarsh Stadium last Friday night.

In what may be a portent of things to come in Adelaide the match was heavily promoted and the crowd turned up in large numbers to support the two non ethnic based clubs.

Port Lion dominated most of the match and threatened to score from early in the game. A Joe Calabria shot after seven minutes needed a good reflex save by Cumberland 'keeper Matt Peace.

Cumberland fought back, and in the 22nd minute Shane Savage struck a thumping shot from 35m out, with Port Lion 'keeper Shane Maycock just getting his fingertips to push the ball away.

With Port Lion brimming with confidence, Peter Mihalopoulos made a run along the left, reaching the six-yard box in the 26th minute. As he lined up for his shot, a strong tackle sent Mihalopoulos to the ground, with appeals for a penalty. The pleas were unanswered and the swing of play seemed to then start swinging towards Cumberland's way.

In the 34th minute, Cumberland earned what was to be their only corner for the match. Matt Villios sent the corner in low, which was headed out by the Port Lion defence straight back to Villios, who then sent the ball back much deeper into the penalty area. Towering Cumberland sweeper Les Matiscsak stormed into the penalty area to meet the cross and nodded the ball into the net to put Cumberland 1-0 ahead.

David Forster almost extended Cumberland's lead five minutes later when his shot from 25m wasn't struck quite hard enough, but still required a good diving save from Maycock to keep the ball out.

Cumberland maintained the pressure and were the stronger team for the remainder of the half.

Into the second half, Port Lion regained their rhythm, retaining greater possession of the ball and creating many goal-scoring opportunities.

The ball was fed through to Joe Calabria after 56 minutes, and with an almost open goal to aim at he sent his shot well over the crossbar. In the 69th minute, with only the 'keeper to beat, Calabria sent his shot just left of the goal post.

Cumberland almost sealed the game in the 81st minute, with David Forster lining up just outside the penalty area but sending his shot just over the bar.

Port Lion 'keeper Maycock was red-carded in the dying stages of the game during a play when he ran out of the penalty area to thwart a Cumberland attack. As he scrambled to return back into the penalty area the incoming shot hit his arm as he fell to the ground and referee Matthew Cream had no hesitation in sending the 'keeper off, with less than a minute to play.

In the end it was Port Lion's poor finishing that let them down on the night and they will surely ponder all the missed opportunities as Cumberland take the trophy as 1999 Champions.

The Alex Hastings Medal (for the best player on the ground during the Grand Final), was awarded to Les Matiscsak, who not only scored the title-winning goal but maintained a strong

Cumberland defence against the Port Lion attacks.

Port Lion 0 - Cumberland 1

(L. Matiscsak 34)

Port Lion Pirates:

S. Maycock, S. Carey, S. Parissos, P. Martin, K. Antoniou, L. Maio, J. Calabria, P. Mihalopoulos, D. Sordillo, B. Misailidis, F. Keegan.

Subs: P. Styrios(80), M. Barbier(88), G. Kargiotis(gk)(90)

Subs not used: K. Alagich, R. Calabria

Cumberland United:

M. Peace(gk), N. Mitchell, D. Gagliardi, L. Matiscsak, M. Villios, R. Walczynski, S. Savage, C. Nicholls, D. Forster, N. Galanopoulos, A. Leane.

Subs: D. Raponi(88), M. Higham(89)

Subs not used: A. Best, A. Fowler, P. Kourkoulis(gk)

Yellow Cards:

Port Lion: K. Antoniou(38), J. Calabria(46), D. Sordillo(61), B. Misailidis(80)
Cumberland: C. Nicholls(35), M. Villios(62), L. Matiscsak(66), D. Gagliardi(77)

Red Cards:

Port Lion: S. Maycock(gk)(90) (Handling of ball outside penalty area)
Cumberland: nil

Officials:

Referee: Matthew Cream

Linesmen: Mike Parry, Steve Craggs

4th Official: C. Zetter

In the early game the MetroStars just failed to continue their fairy tale run in the State League. The Stars have gained promotion to the Premier League in their first season but failed to carry off the Grand Final.

Adelaide City won the South Australia State League title when they defeated MetroStars 2-0.

Michael Cartwright opened the scoring for Adelaide City in the 60th minute, when he out-leapt MetroStars 'keeper George Yatsis, to head the ball into the net.

Robert Saraceno clinched the title for Adelaide City, when he slotted home after 85 minutes, catching the MetroStars on the break.

In only their first season as a Club, MetroStars have earned immediate promotion into next year's South Australia Premier League, together with Adelaide City.

They will replace the relegated Olympians (who failed to win a game all year) and Para Hills.

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MONARO TO MEET SUNS IN GRAND FINAL

By Greg Welsh

Paul Macor's first goal in two years gave Monaro a 1-0 victory over the Weston Creek Royals in Sunday's ACT Premier League semi-final at Majura Oval.

Macor is usually content with stopping goals and leaving the scoring to brother Danny, but on this occasion the burly defender stole the limelight by sending his team through to next week's grand final against the Capital City Suns.

Monaro dominated the match throughout, but had to wait until 10 minutes before the final whistle for the winning goal, due to a brilliant display by Weston custodian Troy Boots.

The goalkeeper earned post-match praise from both coaches for single-handedly keeping the Royals in the contest by denying first-half strikes from Danny Macor and Darryl North.

Weston's best opportunity of the match arrived in the 69th minute when Monaro 'keeper Ian Jefferies spilled a cross at the feet of Royals fullback Tim Dale.

However Dale's shot was blocked by a Monaro defender and the competition's leading goal-poacher, Steve Lazzari, sent his follow-up effort high and wide of the target.

At the other end, Danny Macor finally managed to beat Boots only for his low shot to strike the left upright, leaving the Monaro captain clutching his head in frustration.

But Macor's celebrations were put on hold for just three minutes, when brother Paul rose well above the pack to head home Joe Campagna's tantalising corner kick.

A relieved Andrew Monterosso admitted his team will need to step up a gear for next week's final, but can claim a psychological edge from a 3-1 victory over the Suns at their last meeting.

"We'll be quietly confident next week against the Suns," the Monaro coach said. "We're there - that's the main thing."

Weston coach Jimmy Bland was proud of his team's performance given the absence of first-team regulars Adrian Paragalli and Peter Hader.

"The guys rallied - they showed a lot of commitment and character. We don't have the big names, the big stars like some of the other clubs - what we've got is team spirit."

Nick Guoth reports that the last Grand Final of the millennium for the ACT Premier League will be held next Sunday. The combatants in first grade are Capital

City Suns and Monaro.

It will be a game where flair will be pitted against strength and teamwork.

The match will be one of the closest for many a season and will mirror the ongoing battle that the two teams conducted during the regular season.

The Suns have a number of stylish players led by the veterans Tony Lemezina up front and goalkeeper Tony Giannasca. They mix this with the younger stars like Pat Phommaseisy, Yuki Onda and Luka Udjur.

On the other side there is a team that has been solid all season. Hard tackling, very strong in defence and mature forwards. A Monaro side that has been there before and has a great tradition to uphold.

The venue for the match will be either Greenway Oval or Seiffert Oval in Queanbeyan which would actually suit both clubs considering their support out in that area.

In the lower grades, Belconnen United meet University of Canberra in the Under 23s whilst Belconnen United play Gungahlin Juventus in the Youth Grade.

On Saturday, in Cooma, the Premier League 2 Grand Finals will be played. The matches will be lead-ups to a pre-season game between Ericsson Cup teams Canberra Cosmos and Northern Spirit.

In both grades the teams will be O'Connor Knights and Tuggeranong United with O'Connor favoured to take the double.

Premier League Division 1:

Preliminary Finals

1st Grade: Monaro 1 d Weston Creek 0

Under 23's: University of Canberra 3 d Weston Creek 2 AET

Youth Semi-Finals:

Belconnen United 2 d University of Canberra 1

Gungahlin Juventus 7 d Tuggeranong United 0

Premier League Division 2:

Preliminary Finals

1st Grade: O'Connor Knights 5 d ANU 1

Reserve Grade: Tuggeranong United 3 d ANU 1

State League Grand Finals

Division 1: ANU 2 d Belconnen United 1

Division 2: Belconnen United 3 d

Gungahlin Juventus 2

Division 3: Valley Blues 2 d Harmonie 0

Division 4: Trojans 3 d Harmonie 2

CANBERRA PLANS FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

By Nick Guoth

With the change of the century, Soccer Canberra is looking at a different route for clubs to take when they apply for entry to the 2000 Premier League Division 1.

In the past, the club with the worst record in First Grade, irrelevant of its performance in other grades, has been relegated. To take their place the top club from Division 2, or one near the top if that club does not want to take its place in Division 1, is promoted.

It was never compulsory for clubs to move to the next level, and promotion and relegation did not exist within the lower Division in the State League. The classic example has been with the ANU, who have always been an amateur club interested only in playing on Saturday afternoons, and not with the big boys on Sundays.

The last teams to be relegated were Tuggeranong United and Canberra City with the likes of the Burns Club and Capital City Suns promoted from Division 2.

There is definitely a strong disparity between the top established clubs and the lower echelon, as has been evidenced this past season. With the exception of the Capital City Suns, who have been a role model for future Division 1 aspirants, those teams that have been promoted in the last five years have all struggled.

Now, Soccer Canberra has decided that promotion and relegation are no longer a possible option and that each club must fulfil a certain set of criteria which will be applied in consideration of Premier League 1 applications.

The criteria are broken up into six items. Five of these produce positive points for the club, whilst the sixth is negative.

The most important item realising 50% is playing performance. The achievements of the club on the field for 1999, whether in Division 1 or Division 2 will be looked at carefully with appropriate weighting based on the level of competition and all results averaged over an 18 game season.

Clubs will be looked at not only for the results of the First grade team, but also the teams in the lower grades, and especially their youth grade.

The last is very important as it gives an indication of the future of the club.

Item number two, weighing in at 20%, is Administration and Finance. Clubs will be assessed on the competency and professionalism in these two areas.

It will especially look at the establishment of administrative structures that deal with all the requirements of managing an efficient semi-professional club.

Also worth 20% is the area of coaching and development. The category will look at the use of accredited coaches, establishment of appropriate development pathways from junior soccer to elite senior soccer and the club's use of its development programs.

Next is the area of media. Although

only worth 5%, it is important to make sure the marketing and promotional activities of the club will raise the profile of the club and soccer. It will include print, radio and television as well as the use of the internet. Bonuses will also be gained if the club produces its own publications for distribution at matches.

Finally the remaining 5% is given to the usage of facilities. Ownership of the club's own ground is of paramount importance. The choice of a home ground with facilities including covered grandstands, canteen and dressing sheds is very important.

Following the additions, clubs will be assessed on their conduct which may have been regarded unsatisfactory. Each occurrence will provide a deduction of up to 10%.

The criteria being looked at includes crowd disturbances, excessive red cards for players and unsatisfactory conduct by club officials.

So, what does this all mean to the clubs currently in the Division 1 and those in Division 2 with an ambition to play at a higher level?

At present there are two clubs vying for entry into Division 1. They are Belwest Foxes and Tuggeranong United. Both have performed well in all grades as well as in the Rockets Youth League.

Tuggeranong have a slight advantage and look near certainties for re-entry. They have re-built the club after a set of demoralising seasons and with a very large youth base are a prime example of what is needed to fulfil the criteria.

Belwest are a new club only in existence at a level other than Youth for the last two seasons. Based in the western suburbs of Belconnen, they also have a very good junior base. More importantly are the club's plans to build their own stadium.

Looking at the current clubs in Division 1 there are a few that must be seeing the writing on the wall and are looking at how they will be able to convince Soccer Canberra as to re-admission to the elite level.

One of these is Queanbeyan City Lions. They finished last in all of the three grades and had a number of disciplinary problems early in the season. Certainly things have turned around and in the areas of finance and administration the club has improved, but the negatives could be too excessive.

Most likely to join them would be the Burns Club. Performance on the field has not been the best, even with the real young squad they have, the club may struggle to convince the Soccer Canberra to keep them at the top level.

Other than that, the only club with any chance of problems is the University of Canberra. Yet they have made strides especially in development of a junior base and coaching and have consistently been one of the top sides in the Under 23s, which all bodes well for the club.

Submissions need to be in soon, and all will be decided as to the make-up of the 2000 Premier League Division 1 before the end of the year.



NEXT WEEK INSIDE SOCCER BRINGS YOU THE STORY OF CANBERRA ICON, DIRECTOR OF COACHING, JIMMY HAYES WHO HAS RETIRED AFTER 45 YEARS INVOLVEMENT

ENGLAND STRUGGLING

England found that competing against Poland and the Austrian referee in Warsaw was too much for them - and Kevin Keegan's team may well be out of Euro 2000 as a result.

Unless Sweden beat Poland in Stockholm next month, it will be all over and England's players can spend the summer on the beach.

Two penalties - one blatant, one debatable - were ignored by Austrian referee Gunther Benko, and with six minutes left he completed his trio of wounding decisions by rightly sending off David Batty for a foul on Radoslaw Michalski.

So England's recent spate of sendings off - David Beckham against Argentina and then Paul Ince, Paul Scholes and Batty in this competition - continues unabated but the real disappointment of the night was the result, a draw with what proved to be a rather average Polish team.

It was always going to be a night to curdle the blood or make it boil. The atmosphere was reminiscent of the final two games of England's World Cup in Lens and Saint-Etienne, when the incredible noise made concentration and nerve the most vital ingredients of any player's make-up.

It was unfortunate that the unacceptable face of such passion for football was on show outside the ground, where sporadic, running battles were fought before kick-off. But no-one who relishes competition could fail to be roused by the wall of sound which greeted the players and continued unabated for 90 minutes.

England began poorly - injudicious in their passing, awkward in their control of the ball and less sharp to the breakdown of play.

That helped to make Janusz Wojcik's team appear a tidy, dynamic little outfit in the early stages - something which pleased the home crowd mightily.

In other games world champions France are clinging desperately to their Euro 2000

hopes after scraping a 3-2 victory over lightweights Armenia.

France failed to translate territorial dominance into a big winning margin and the recent failings of their much vaunted World Cup defence have seen them concede five goals in their last four qualifiers while scoring six.

Their failure to run up a respectable goal difference has left them in the weakest position of the three group four teams vying for two places in next year's finals, one direct and one through the playoffs.

It's not normal for a world champion team to give up playing as they did in the last 12 minutes, said an angry coach Roger Lemerre after the French clumsily conceded an injury-time penalty for Armenia's second goal.

France - one point behind group leaders Ukraine and equal with Russia but behind them by a difference of four goals - must beat Iceland in their last qualifier at home on October 9.

Should they draw, the French would need Ukraine to win in Russia to ensure they finished second and reached the playoffs.

The only way France, Euro 96 semifinalists, can qualify automatically is by defeating Iceland while Russia and Ukraine draw.

Denmark brought Mark Hughes' honeymoon period as Wales manager to an abrupt end when they won 3-2 against Italy in Naples to end Welsh hopes of qualifying for the Euro 2000 play-offs.

Goals by Diego Fuser in the ninth minute and Christian Vieri in the 35th gave Italy a 2-0 lead.

But Denmark rallied in style either side of half-time to level through Martin Joergensen and Michael Schjoenberg, then a strike by Jon Dahl Tomasson in the 63rd minute gave them the win that keeps alive their hopes of going through as Group One winners.

Sweden ensured their automatic qualification ahead of England and Poland in Group Five with a 1-0 victory in

Luxembourg, thanks to a 39th-minute goal from Niclas Alexandersson.

Savo Milosevic scored in 12 seconds as Yugoslavia took over the lead of the Republic of Ireland's qualifying group by winning 4-2 in Macedonia.

An own goal and strikes from Dejan Stankovic and Ljubinko Drulovic gave the visitors victory despite a second-half fightback by Macedonia. Yugoslavia now top Group Eight by a point from the Irish.

Bosnia - Herzegovina, one of Scotland's rivals for second spot in Group Nine, lost 3-0 to the Czech Republic.

Steve Staunton saved the Republic of Ireland from humiliation in the game against Malta which so nearly destroyed his country's European Championship ambitions.

Mick McCarthy's players will now either qualify automatically for the Euro 2000 finals or assure themselves of a play-off place if they win in Macedonia next month.

Robbie Keane and Gary Breen appeared to have given their side total command with a goal each within the first 21 minutes.

The Irish arrogance transformed into panic inside seven dreadful, second-half minutes in which Malta equalised.

But Staunton, captain in the absence of Roy Keane, kept his nerve 17 minutes from the end to secure victory for his desperate countrymen, when he delivered a brilliant left-footed free-kick from 25 yards which swerved high into the net.



David Batty receives his marching orders against Poland

EURO 2000 GROUP STANDINGS

Group 1	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Denmark	8	4	2	2	11	8	14
Italy	7	4	2	1	13	5	14
Switzerland	7	3	2	2	7	5	11
Wales	7	3	0	4	7	14	9
Belarus	7	0	2	5	4	10	2
Group 2	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Norway	9	7	1	1	19	8	22
Slovenia	9	5	2	2	12	11	17
Latvia	9	3	4	2	12	10	13
Greece	8	2	3	3	8	8	9
Georgia	9	1	2	6	7	16	5
Albania	8	0	4	4	6	11	4
Group 3	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	7	7	0	1	20	4	18
Turkey	7	5	1	1	15	6	16
Finland	7	2	1	3	8	12	7
Northern Ireland	7	1	2	4	3	15	5
Moldova	8	0	4	4	7	17	4
Group 4	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ukraine	9	5	4	0	13	4	19
Russia	9	5	0	3	21	11	18
France	9	5	3	1	14	8	18
Iceland	9	4	3	2	10	4	15
Armenia	9	1	2	6	5	15	5
Andorra	9	0	0	9	3	25	0
Group 5	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	7	6	1	0	8	1	19
England	8	3	4	1	14	4	13
Poland	7	4	1	2	12	6	13
Bulgaria	7	1	2	4	3	8	5
Luxembourg	7	0	0	7	2	20	0
Group 6	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	7	6	0	1	39	5	18
Israel	7	4	1	2	25	6	13
Cyprus	7	4	0	3	11	18	12
Austria	7	3	1	3	16	19	10
San Marino	8	0	0	8	1	44	0
Group 7	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Romania	9	6	3	0	22	3	21
Portugal	9	6	2	1	29	4	20
Slovakia	9	4	2	3	11	9	14
Hungary	9	3	3	3	14	7	12
Azerbaijan	9	1	1	7	6	25	4
Liechtenstein	9	1	0	7	2	36	4
Group 8	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yugoslavia	7	5	1	1	16	6	16
R. Ireland	7	5	0	2	13	5	15
Croatia	7	4	2	1	11	7	14
Macedonia	7	2	1	4	12	13	7
Malta	8	0	0	8	6	27	0
Group 9	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Czech Republic	9	9	0	0	24	5	27
Scotland	8	3	3	2	11	10	12
Estonia	9	3	2	4	14	13	11
Lithuania	9	3	2	4	7	14	11
Bosnia	8	2	2	4	10	15	8
Faroe Is	9	0	3	6	4	15	3

RESULTS AND FIXTURES

GROUP 1

Switzerland 2-0 Belarus
Italy 2-3 Denmark

October 10 1999

Wales v Switzerland
Belarus v Italy

GROUP 2

Norway 4-0 Slovenia
Georgia 2-2 Latvia

October 6 1999

Greece v Albania

GROUP 3

Germany 4-0 N.Ireland
Moldova 1-1 Turkey

October 9 1999

Germany v Turkey
Finland v N.Ireland

GROUP 4

Andorra 1-2 Russia
Iceland 0-1 Ukraine
Armenia 2-3 France

October 9 1999

France v Iceland
Russia v Ukraine
Andorra v Armenia

GROUP 5

Luxembourg 0-1
Sweden Poland 0-0 England

October 9 1999

Bulgaria v Luxembourg
Sweden v Poland

GROUP 6

Israel 8-0 San Marino
Spain 8-0 Cyprus

October 10 1999

Austria v Cyprus
Spain v Israel

GROUP 7

Romania 1-1 Portugal

Slovakia 2-0 Liechtenstein
Hungary 3-0 Azerbaijan

October 9 1999

Liechtenstein v Romania
Portugal v Hungary
Azerbaijan v Slovakia

GROUP 8

Malta 2-3 Rep Ireland
Macedonia 2-4 Yugoslavia

October 10 1999

Croatia v Yugoslavia
Macedonia v Rep Ireland

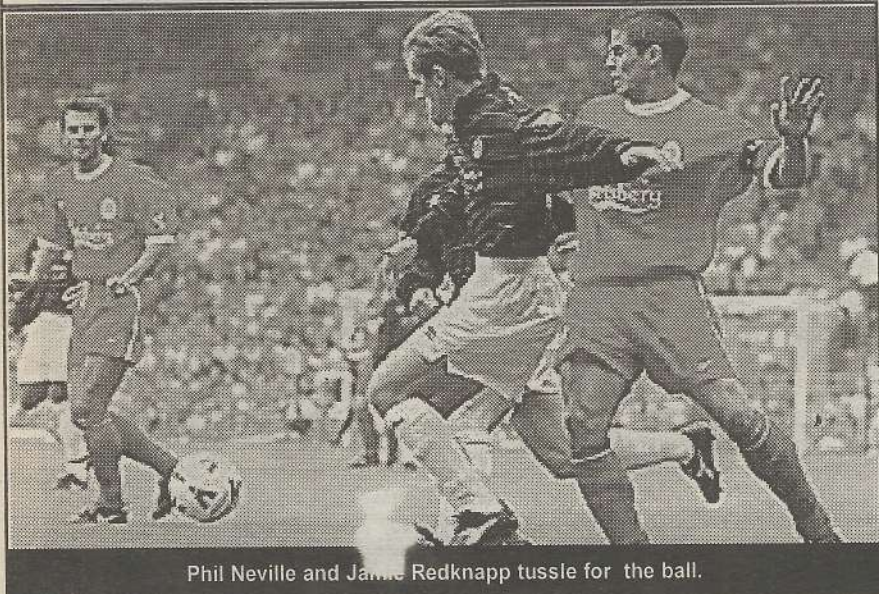
GROUP 9

Czech Rep 3-0 Bosnia
Faroes 0-1 Lithuania
Estonia 0-0 Scotland

October 5 1999

Scotland v Bosnia
October 9 1999
Estonia v Bosnia
Czech Rep v Faroes
Scotland v Lithuania

TEN MAN UNITED HOLD ON



Phil Neville and Jamie Redknapp tussle for the ball.

Liverpool 2 Man United 3

Ten-man Manchester United dug deep into their reserves of pride and character to survive a battering at Anfield and set a new club record for unbeaten league games in the process.

Without Andy Cole for the last 18 minutes - sent off for kicking out at Rigobert Song - United denied Liverpool the point they fought so desperately for.

It was an almost mirror image of the same game last season, only the end result differed. Last term 10-man United lost a two-goal lead in the dramatic title run in.

This time it was just too much for Liverpool to recover from a first-half horror show, in which Jamie Carragher scored two own goals, to claw their way back from 3-1 behind.

United tore Liverpool apart in the first half, embarrassing and routing a defence that conceded those two Carragher efforts as well as an unopposed Cole header.

Liverpool found their spirit after that, Sami Hyypia, with his first goal for the club, and a second half effort from Patrik Berger, made sure that there was a grandstand finish for a game that always produced fantastic passion and entertainment.

There was no Roy Keane, Denis Irwin and Gary Neville for United, while Liverpool's skipper Jamie Redknapp passed a late fitness test on his injured ankle.

But despite United's considerable injury list, and the fact that they gave debuts to £8.5million of new talent in keeper Massimo Taibi and full-back Mickael Silvestre - who almost joined

Liverpool in midweek - the European champions still served up a quality of play that left the Anfield side trailing in their wake.

It took just four minutes for the Mersey hordes to be silenced. Dwight Yorke found Ryan Giggs out on the left, and when the cross arrowed towards the near post, poor Jamie Carragher stuck his head in the way to deflect the ball wide of keeper Sander Westerveld into the far corner.

Liverpool were reeling again after 18 minutes. Steven Gerrard brought down Beckham, who flicked out at the youngster - just like he did to Diego Simeone in the World Cup - but referee Graham Barber chose to ignore the reaction.

The free-kick sailed into the box, nobody did anything to block Andy Cole's run or even jump with him, and the forgotten England man powered home a header totally unhindered by defenders.

Liverpool managed to find something at this point, staring down the barrel of a gun.

And it showed that Taibi, like many Italian 'keepers, is vulnerable in the air. A 23rd minute Redknapp free-kick sailed beyond the far post, and Taibi came charging out to totally miss the ball allowing Hyypia to send a diving header into the far corner of the net.

Two minutes from the break Liverpool were again badly exposed at the back. Berger tripped

Beckham after being badly exposed by a piece of trickery, and when the England star's free-kick arrived in the box Henning Berg had a header blocked by Song and in the resulting scramble Carragher turned the ball into his own net for another own goal.

Liverpool totally reconstructed their defence at the break, reverting to a five-man back line.

United were happy to sit back and hit an increasingly desperate Liverpool on the break in the second half.

Liverpool's last throw was the arrival of Michael Owen, along with Vegard Heggem after 64 minutes. Four minutes later Liverpool got their second.

Matteo played in Berger on the left, and the Czech held off Berg to slide his shot past Taibi.

After 72 minutes all hell broke loose after Song and Cole tangled on the left flank.

Song clearly fouled the United man, who stupidly turned and kicked out at the Cameroon defender. Referee Barber, who had booked Cole for dissent in the first half, pulled out a second yellow and then the dreaded red.

Such is United's strength of character that when referee Barber did blow his whistle, the ball had been run into the far corner by some intelligent play from Giggs, and there was nothing Liverpool could do about it.

Liverpool: Westerveld, Song, Hyypia, Matteo, Carragher, Redknapp, Berger, Thompson (Smicer 46), Gerrard (Heggem 64), Camara (Owen 64), Fowler.
Goals: Hyypia 23, Berger 68.

Man Utd: Taibi, Neville (Clegg 83), Stam, Berg, Silvestre, Giggs, Butt (Waltwork 39), Scholes, Beckham, Cole, Yorke.
Sent Off: Cole (71).
Goals: Carragher 3 og, Cole 18, Carragher 44 og.
Crowd: 44,929

DEANE'S HEADER STEALS POINTS

Middlesbrough 3 Southampton 2

Brian Deane got Middlesbrough out of jail as his side twice came from behind to see off battling Southampton.

Hassan Kachloul and Marian Pahars put the visitors ahead inside either side of half time.

But first Gary Pallister, and then Paul Gascoigne from the penalty spot, equalised before Deane clinched all three points 12 minutes from time.

Dave Jones' side, who had Luis Boa Morte sent off for deliberate hand ball, left the Riverside Stadium desperately disappointed after dominating for long periods as Boro failed to establish any kind of momentum.

Teessiders' indecision cost them dearly after quarter of an hour when Ripley aimed a high ball into the box. The retreating Pallister left it to 'keeper Mark Schwarzer but the Australian had got his bearings wrong and found himself stranded outside the penalty area.

Schwarzer tried to head the ball clear but succeeded only in delivering it to Kachloul's feet and the Moroccan kept his head to slide a shot into the empty net from 25 yards.

Pallister's eagerness to redeem himself for his part in the debacle sent him charging forward three minutes later, and no one was more surprised than Saints keeper Paul Jones when the big defender let fly with a dipping effort which found it's way into the bottom corner.

Although the home side toiled hard, they were making little serious progress and the visitors always looked dangerous on the

break with the veteran Mark Hughes pulling the strings in the middle of the park.

It was the former Manchester United and Chelsea star who fashioned the opening for his side's second on 55 minutes when he robbed the dithering Ricard and sent Boa Morte away down the left.

His pass allowed Pahars to take aim with the home defence at sixes and sevens, and the Latvian striker produced the perfect finish to defeat Schwarzer.

Ince finally started to work his way into the game as the half wore on and he had already gone close twice when he dragged his side back into contention.

The midfielder's header from Gascoigne's 67th-minute corner seemed destined for the top corner when Boa Morte handled it, earning himself a red card and Boro a penalty.

Gascoigne drove the ball home from the spot to level and give his side fresh impetus and they got their reward within 11 minutes.

Ziege's bending cross was too good for the Southampton defence and Deane rose to the far post to power a header home.

Middlesbrough: Schwarzer, Stamp (Stockdale 64), Vickers (Gavin 64), Cooper, Pallister, Ziege, Mustoe, Gascoigne, Ince, Ricard (Armstrong 64), Deane.
Goals: Pallister 17, Gascoigne 67 pen, Deane 78.

Southampton: Jones, Dodd, Lundekvam, Richards, Benali, Ripley (Oakley 27), Soltyved, Hughes, Kachloul, Boa Morte, Pahars.
Goals: Kachloul 15, Pahars 55.
Crowd: 32,165

WEDNESDAY ROCK BOTTOM

Sheffield Wednesday 0 Everton 2

The sands of time now appear to be quickly running out for under-pressure Sheffield Wednesday manager Danny Wilson.

Wilson watched his rock-bottom side crash to their sixth Premiership defeat of the season, and their fourth at Hillsborough as Everton became the latest side to rub salt into ever-deepening wounds.

At least he will be able to point to the fact his players were able to create chances, although he will have been left shaking his head at the defending which led to the two goals.

Wednesday, though, just can't buy one at the moment as they drew a blank for the third successive match - even with Benito Carbone in the side.

The Italian started on the bench, a decision which led to his dressing-room walkout at Southampton two weeks ago, a fine of a fortnight's wages and a war of silence with Wilson.

The duo have yet to speak to one another since Carbone returned to training on Monday, with such friction surely doing little to aid Wednesday's perilous plight.

But even his mercurial skills failed to alter the course of a game which had been taken out of Wednesday's hands with two quick goals.

Everton took the lead against the run of play, but they also showed Wednesday just how to take chances when they are presented.

David Unsworth's high 15th minute ball to the edge of the area was knocked down by Kevin Campbell, who bundled over covering central defender Emerson Thome in the process.

With Emerson prone, and with Francis Jeffers the intended target from Campbell's

header having slipped, it was left to Nick Barmby to rifle home a 20-yard drive beyond Kevin Pressman for his second of the season.

The visitors then went 2-0 up three minutes later as Mitch Ward and Jeffers beautifully worked the overlap down the right wing.

The latter's cross was then met at the far post by Scot Gemmill for his first this campaign and with Wednesday's defence all at sea.

Wednesday's heads refused to go down, but their midfield lacked bite and although Carlton Palmer might not be a saviour, at least he will add steel should Wilson eventually clinch his signature from Nottingham Forest.

Gilles De Bilde again looked inventive while he was on - with Carbone his replacement - as he had two chances which went begging, while Andy Booth should have at least hit the target with a free header in the second half.

In the end it was a third win of the season for Everton as they lifted themselves into the top half of the table and with the basis on which to build for a promising future.

As for Wilson and Wednesday the clock is ticking. The question is just how much time remains.

Sheff Wed: Pressman, Nolan, Thome, Walker, Briscoe, Sonner, Atherton, Rudi (O'Donnell 46), Alexandersson (Donnelly 64), De Bilde (Carbone 64), Booth.

Everton: Gerrard, Weir, Gough, Watson, Unsworth, Barmby, Ward (Hutchison 67), Gemmill, Pembroke, Jeffers (Collins 79), Campbell, Hutchison (Xavier 47).
Goals: Barmby 14, Gemmill 18.
Crowd: 23,539

SUKER'S OPENING STRIKES

Arsenal 3 Aston Villa 1

Davor Suker cracked a debut double to re-establish Arsenal's Premiership credentials after two defeats in the last three games and boost their morale for today's tough Champions League opener in Italy against Fiorentina.

The Croat ace, a £3.5million signing from Real Madrid when Arsenal finally let sulky Nicolas Anelka go to the Spanish giants at the start of the season, missed a penalty when appearing as a substitute at Anfield two weeks ago.

But he regained his scoring touch with his country's stoppage-time winner against the Republic of Ireland in Zagreb last week and showed again just what he can do against hapless Villa.

Arsenal badly needed his opening strike in first-half stoppage time because jaded Villa, having been under the cosh for almost all the first half, had stolen the lead when former Highbury favourite Paul Merson produced some magical control to match any professional juggler before slipping Julian Joachim in behind the Gunners defence to easily beat goalkeeper Alex Manninger.

Within seconds, though, a wonderful flick by Dennis Bergkamp sent Suker, who had

fired two earlier goal-worthy efforts without success, sprinting past Ugo Ehiogu to put a solid toe-poke past David James.

And four minutes after the break, by which time the elusive Marc Overmars should have put Arsenal ahead instead of blazing Bergkamp's pass wildly over the bar, Suker struck again.

Referee David Elleray who had been dishing out an array of yellow cards even though the action had been far from hectic in the baking sun, harshly penalised James for time wasting and awarded an indirect free kick 10 yards from goal.

Suker made it blatantly clear just what he wanted Bergkamp to do with it and when the Dutchman touched the ball aside his co-striker thumped it through the crowd-scene on the goalline and into the roof of the net.

After that it was a stroll for the Gunners - although Villa had hardly got out of the blocks any way. They looked far from a team that started the game second only to Manchester United in the table.

When Dion Dublin and Lee Hendrie limped off with injuries the white flag was clearly showing and it was a wonder Arsenal did not add a whole catalogue of further goals.

The main reason was substitute goalkeeper Peter Enckelman, making his

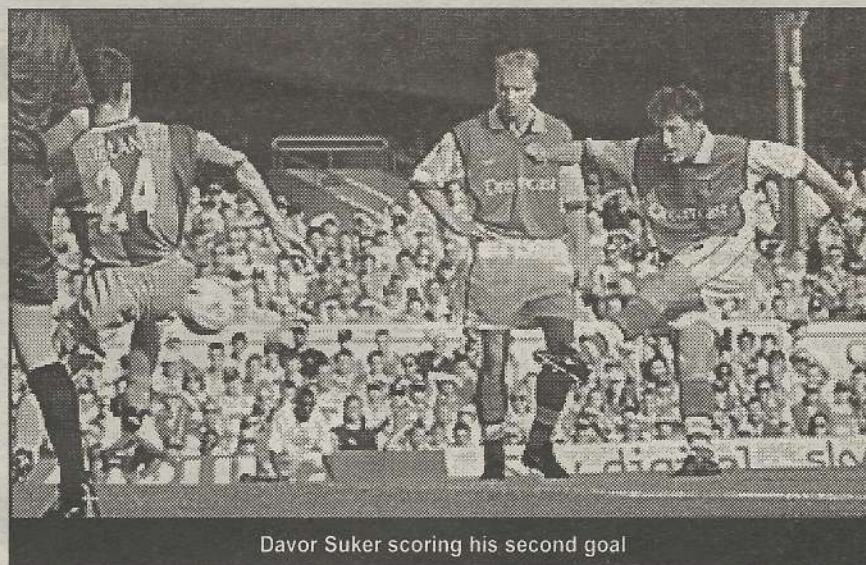
Premiership debut just after Suker's second goal when James, who had been complaining of a knee injury in the first half, was finally taken off.

The youngster made an impressive diving save from Arsenal's Brazilian substitute Silvinho and twice kept out the hard-working Ray Parlour when the industrious England winger blasted powerful drives.

But Enckelman had no chance when Kanu finally added Arsenal's third eight minutes from the end. Overmars escaped down the right from Parlour's pass and provided the easiest opportunities for the graceful Nigerian to slot home.

Kanu's entry eight minutes earlier showed that Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger was already thinking of Fiorentina next week and he took off Bergkamp in anticipation of asking the non-flying Dutchman to start the 20-hours road trip to central Italy tomorrow.

He could well afford such a luxury because Villa were cannon-fodder long before the end and had to look back on regret for their only missed chance in the first 20 minutes when a marvel-



Davor Suker scoring his second goal

lous interception by the superb Nigel Winterburn stopped Mark Delaney blasting home Merson's crossfield ball that put him into acres of space.

James had kept out a Martin Keown shot when Villa's defence was undone by a delightful chip by Gilles Grimandi.

Ehiogu defiantly blocked a smart effort by Suker who mis-kicked the chance of a hat-trick from Parlour's inviting pass on the hour just eight minutes before making way, to a standing ova-

tion, to Silvinho.

Thierry Henry, the record £10million Arsenal signing, also got into the act as a substitute in the last few minutes but failed to bury another Parlour pass with the goal gaping.

And when right at the death Keown put an unchallenged header wide from Silvinho's free kick it fully illustrated just how many Arsenal might have scored with more clinical finishing.

Arsenal: Manninger, Dixon, Keown, Adams, Winterburn, Parlour, Vieira, Grimandi, Overmars (Henry 82), Bergkamp (Kanu 76), Suker (Silvinho 69).
Goals: Suker 45, 49, Kanu 82.

Aston Villa: James (Enckelman 51), Delaney, Ehiogu, Southgate, Calderwood, Wright, Hendrie (Thompson 62), Taylor, Merson, Dublin (Vassell 71), Joachim.
Goals: Joachim 44.
Crowd: 38,093

MORE OF THE SAME

Chelsea 1 Newcastle 0

Bobby Robson is the fourth Messiah in seven years to try to work the miracle for Newcastle United.

And while it seemed the whole of Tyneside gathered around the white-haired one for his first match in charge at Stamford Bridge there are a lot more prayers to be offered before Newcastle emerge from their season of gloom.

Chelsea defender Frank Leboeuf slotted home the first-half penalty which gave the southerners the points to keep up the pressure on Manchester United. At the end Newcastle were left still rooted to the bottom with just one solitary point for their season's efforts, though there were at least signs that Robson had brought much-needed passion and steel to the Geordie cause.

Alan Shearer, the England captain, may be able to fill his boots against the cooks and plumbers of Luxembourg, but against World Cup-winning defenders such as Marcel Desailly and Leboeuf he looked distinctly short of ideas and desperately lacking in the speed of thought and the athleticism of body necessary to deal with the Premiership's elite.

"Shearer, you're off the pace," was the most common shout from the stand - and that was from the Newcastle following.

He could not be faulted for industry - though try as he might his partnership with Ferguson does not promise the riches for which Tyneside had hoped.

To their credit, however, Newcastle had given almost as good as they had got for 36 minutes in a game in which they were never out-classed or overwhelmed but from which they never really threatened to take anything.

When the breakthrough came it was no surprise that Gianfranco Zola was the instigator. The little Italian, such an imaginative and enterprising cog at the fulcrum of this Chelsea side, had received his club Player of the Year award for last season on the pitch just before kick-off.

It was Zola's curling free-kick which picked out Celestine Babayaro right in front of goal in the Newcastle penalty area.

As the Chelsea defender flung himself for the header his shirt was tugged back by Gary Speed and referee Graham Poll had no alternative but to point to the spot.

Leboeuf stood up to crash the ball home and all Newcastle's early resolve was in danger of dissipating.

It was never pretty - but at least Robson will contend that this battling performance was a bridgehead on which he can rally the Toon army.

Only time will tell.

Chelsea: De Goey, Ferrer, Desailly, Leboeuf, Le Saux (Poyet 57), Goldbaek (Petrescu 46), Wise, Morris, Babayaro.
Goals: Leboeuf 37 pen.

Newcastle: Wright, Barton, Dabizas, Goma, Domi, Dyer, Speed, Lee (Maric 77), Solano (Hughes 87), Shearer, Ferguson (Robinson 73).
Crowd: 35,092

SUNDERLAND DO IT EASY

Sunderland 2 Leicester 0

Paul Butler and Gavin McCann scored their first Premiership goals to earn revenge for Sunderland over Leicester at the Stadium of Light.

Former Bury defender Butler powered a header home in the first period from McCann's corner and McCann completed a miserable day for the visitors, who also had defender Gerry Taggart dismissed for two fouls on Kevin Phillips, eight minutes from time.

Sunderland enjoyed complete dominance through the game as their midfield bossed the usually reliable Leicester combination of Muzzy Izzet and Neil Lennon.

And former Everton youngster McCann deserved particular praise for a fine display which almost included an early goal when he tried his luck with an 18-yard drive which drifted wide.

To his credit, Emile Heskey was not prepared to let the home side have the game to themselves and Steve Bould was cautioned for an early challenge on the England Under-21 striker.

Referee Andy D'Urso provided the comic relief of the afternoon when he proved that there is a major flaw in the Premier League's decision to mic-up match officials. The referee was forced to have his ear-piece taped to the side of his head after it continually dropped off.

The Foxes went behind in the 29th minute when McCann swung over a corner from the right. Butler leaped highest to power a header past Flowers despite the attempted clearance by Andy Impey.

It was no more than Sunderland deserved for their first half display, which although not classy, was industrious and hard-working.

The Wearsiders were in the ascendancy

and Quinn almost set Phillips clear with a neat through ball but Sinclair hoofed the ball away in the nick of time.

Confidence was so high in the camp that Phillips even attempted to put a spectacular gloss on the scoreline with an outlandish scissor kick from the edge of the area but the ball dropped on to the roof of the Leicester net.

Leicester appeared more composed when they came out for the second period but five minutes of madness by Taggart left the Foxes with an even greater mountain to climb.

The referee had no choice but to brandish the yellow card after the Northern Irish international hauled down Phillips in the 57th minute.

And, as tempers flared across the pitch, Taggart's misery was completed five minutes later when he received his second caution for a foul on Phillips and he promptly left the field.

The one-man advantage almost paid off for the home side in the 72nd minute but a tremendous double save from Flowers from Schwarz kept the Foxes in the game.

And Kevin Ball almost celebrated his return to the starting line up with a drive which flew inches over the crossbar.

Then McCann wrapped up the points for the home side after a penetrating run by Phillips.

The striker laid the ball off to the midfielder who drove past Flowers to cap a fine personal performance.

Sunderland: Sorensen, Makin, Butler, Bould, Gray, Summerbee, Ball, Schwarz (Williams 74), McCann (Roy 86), Quinn (Dichio 79), Phillips.
Goals: Butler 28, McCann 82.

Leicester: Flowers, Sinclair, Elliott, Taggart, Impey, Savage (Gilchrist 71), Lennon, Izzet, Guppy, Heskey, Cottee (Marshall 57).
Crowd: 30,105

AUSSIES STAR IN IN GOAL FEAST

Coventry 3 Leeds 4

England will pray Coventry City keeper Magnus Hedman enjoys better fortunes when he carries the nation's hopes of qualifying for the European Championship play-offs on his shoulders next month.

Hedman will be between the posts for Sweden when they take on Poland in Stockholm next month - a game the home side will have to win if England are to sneak into the play-offs via the back door.

He was at fault with two of the United goals and saw Lady Luck also desert him to gift David O'Leary's side the winner.

A seven-goal thriller in which Gordon Strachan's battlers played their full part saw Leeds triumph after they had twice fallen into arrears.

Leeds just about deserved to record their first win at Highfield Road since 1993 with Aussie Harry Kewell in outstanding form on the left flank.

Michael Bridges was a real handful for the Coventry back four while David Batty was coolness personified among the possee of young talent surrounding him in the centre of the park.

He showed no reaction to his sending-off against Poland even though he was unmercifully booed every time he touched the ball.

But Coventry will play worse and collect all three points with Gary McAllister pulling the strings in midfield against his former club.

Coventry got off to the perfect start with McAllister putting them in front against his former club after just 62 seconds.

The former Scotland midfielder appeared to be hauled back by David Hopkin after linking up well with Mustapha Hadji and Robbie Keane with the result that referee Steve Dunn pointed to the spot.

Up stepped McAllister to tuck away the spot-kick into the left hand corner of the net even though England 'keeper Nigel Martyn dived the right way.

Eight minutes later Lee Bowyer scored after his first effort rebounded off the legs of Hedman.

In the 18th minute Aloisi restored their lead after a foul by Harry Kewell on Hadji earned the home side a freekick.

McAllister floated in a teasing cross and Aloisi was first to the ball to send a glancing header past the dive of Martyn.

But eight minutes later Leeds were level again through Darren Huckerby's first goal since his move from Highfield Road last month.

Batty supplied the through ball and, as Hedman seemed hesitant in coming off his line, Huckerby raced into the area to slip his shot past the Swedish player into the corner of the net.

There was worse to follow for the home side in the 34th minutes when a real clanger by Hedman gifted Leeds the lead.

He failed to grasp a chip into the area by Bridges and, as the ball broke loose, he brought down Batty after he had burst into the area.

Referee Dunn awarded a second penalty of the game and Ian Harte drilled the spot-kick into the right-hand corner even.

Leeds looked the more composed side at the start of the second half with Kewell having a shot deflected wide by substitute Marcus Hall and then Michael Duberry not far away with a far-post header from a Harte corner.

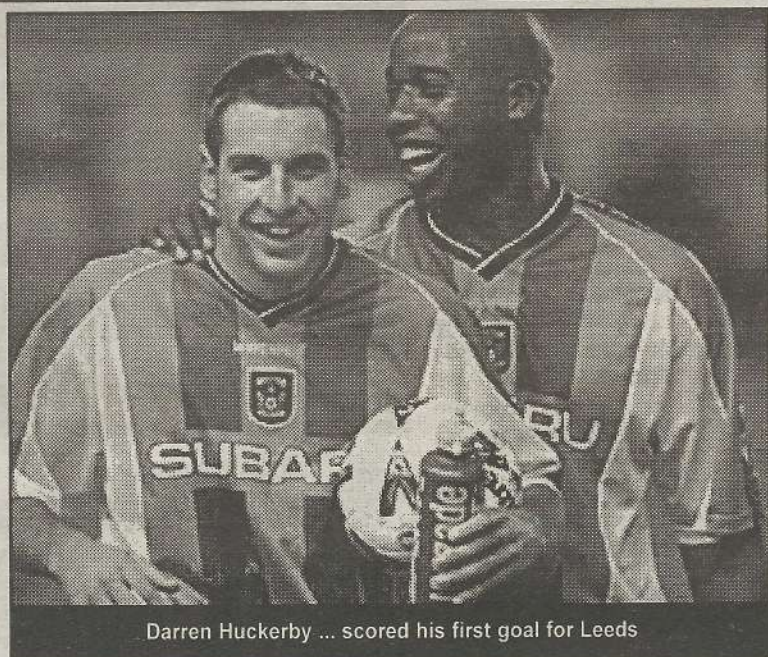
But then Coventry got back on level terms with a spectacular goal from Youssef Chippo after he been found in space by Hadji.

There looked no imminent danger but he beat Martyn all ends up with a rocket shot which flew into the roof of the net.

Luck was then against Hedman as Bridges put Leeds back in front in the 58th minute. He was beaten all ends up by a Kewell effort but the rebound struck him on the back - and meant Bridges had the simplest of chances from close range.

Coventry: Hedman, Quinn (Strachan 75), Shaw, Williams, Edworthy, Chippo, McAllister, Hadji, Froggatt (McSheffrey 75), Aloisi (Hall 46), Keane.
Goals: McAllister 2 pen, Aloisi 17, Chippo 54.

Leeds: Martyn, Mills, Radebe, Duberry (Woodgate 54), Harte (Kelly 62), Hopkin, Bowyer, Batty, Kewell, Bridges, Huckerby.
Goals: Bowyer 7, Huckerby 25, Harte 33 pen, Bridges 60.
Crowd: 21,532



Darren Huckerby ... scored his first goal for Leeds

DI CANIO WINS IT

West Ham 1 Watford 0

Paolo Di Canio produced a wonderful one-man show to give West Ham victory in their last Premiership match before they launch their UEFA Cup campaign.

The Italian saw his team-mates squander a string of chances he created in the first half as the Watford goal led a charmed life.

But he broke the deadlock on 48 minutes after curling a free-kick from a tight angle around the wall and inside Alec Chamberlain's near post.

West Ham should have won by far more than just the one goal - Peter Kennedy cleared a hat-trick of Paulo Wanchope efforts off the line - but the win still sees them move up to third in the Premiership ahead of Thursday's UEFA Cup first round clash with NK Osijek.

And the only black mark for the Hammers came when Stuart Pearce suffered a broken leg in a challenge with Micah Hyde, leaving him facing a four-month lay-off.

His goal today was his third in the League so far this season but that strike, the cheekiest of efforts as he caught out Chamberlain when the Watford keeper - like everyone else at Upton Park - expected a cross, was just one highlight of a mesmerising display.

The visitors, who slumped to their third straight defeat, could not keep him quiet no matter what they tried and Di Canio was the difference between the sides on the day.

West Ham went close to scoring eight times in the first half, with three of those efforts coming in the same dramatic goalmouth scramble.

And on six occasions it was Di Canio who created the opportunity as he revelled in the glorious September sunshine.

After half time he was at it again, starting the move which led to the free-kick from which he scored before he conjured up several other openings for his side.

That Watford did not suffer a heavier defeat was largely due to West Ham's sloppy finishing, the impressive form of Chamberlain in his Premiership debut and a huge slice of fortune.

On 36 minutes Wanchope headed Di Canio's corner against the bar and from the rebound Pearce saw his second follow-up shot - his first was blocked - also strike the frame of the goal.

The Costa Rican hooked the ball past Chamberlain but this time Kennedy was on hand to hack the ball off the line.

The keeper had earlier done well to save Marc Keller's fierce volley, while the Frenchman headed Di Canio's cross over when in space 10 yards out.

Frank Lampard drilled a shot off target from a similar position as West Ham did everything but score against the Watford.

But their hopes of winning a point suffered a severe blow just after the restart when Paul Robinson was penalised for handballing Trevor Sinclair's cross.

Di Canio fired the set-piece home and that should have been the cue for the floodgates to open.

But Kennedy cleared two more Wanchope efforts from under his bar and Chamberlain made splendid saves to deny the former Derby striker and later Keller.

Despite West Ham's dominance, Watford always had a chance of claiming a draw while the score was just 1-0.

Shaka Hislop saved a Mark Williams header before the keeper spilled Des Lyttle's long-range drive and Tommy Mooney hooked the ball over from six yards.

But West Ham hung on to claim all three points and they will go into Thursday's UEFA game in confident mood after this display.

West Ham: Hislop, Potts, Stimac, Pearce (Margas 46), Sinclair, Lomas, Lampard, Moncur (Carrick 81), Keiler, Di Canio, Wanchope.
Goals: Di Canio 48.

Watford: Chamberlain, Lyttle, Page, Williams, Robinson, Wright (Ngongie 70), Hyde, Palmer, Kennedy, Smart (Gudmundsson 70), Mooney.
Crowd: 25,310

DERBY STEALS POINT

Wimbledon 2 Derby 2

Wimbledon could barely hide their frustration as Derby came from behind to steal a share of the points at Selhurst Park.

The Dons looked to be cruising towards a much-needed three points after a valiant second-half comeback which left the visitors stunned.

However a late equaliser wiped the premature smiles from their face and the Crazy Gang continue to search for their elusive first home-win of the season.

Derby may miss the presence of Paulo Wanchope at the heart of their attack but in Argentinian striker Esteban Fuentes Jim Smith has unearthed another rare jewel.

His high energy approach threw Wimbledon manager Egil Olsen's much-maligned zonal defensive system into a full-scale meltdown early on.

The Dons possess one of the Premiership's worst defensive records and despite a promising start their fortunes were soon to take another turn for the worst.

Ben Thatcher, who had been lucky to avoid a caution following a horror challenge on Rory Delap early on, gave away a gilt-edged free kick opportunity which Derby gleefully converted.

Seth Johnson provided the pinpoint delivery and it was Fuentes' fellow Argentinian Horacio Carbonari who found himself unmarked in acres of space to head past Neil Sullivan.

Derby's confidence against Olsen's long-ball tactics meant the hosts reverted to long-range efforts with John Hartson, Carl Cort and Walid Badir all peppering the unfortunate spectators behind Hoult's goal.

A half-time roasting and Wimbledon arrived for the second half

with their creativity restored and their trademark grit and determination revitalised.

Having spent the entire opening period fighting shy of testing Hoult, the Crazy Gang suddenly found the taste for goals.

Cort, who continues to hammer on the door of international recognition following impressive displays at Under 21 level, was the catalyst as Wimbledon struck twice in 60 seconds to snatch the lead from a shell-shocked Derby.

He jinked and weaved down the right flank, firing in a precision cross which Welsh firebrand John Hartson headed home and moments later Jason Euell grabbed his place on the score sheet in a carbon copy goal.

Hartson has struggled to find his feet since his big-money move last season but against Derby he rediscovered the magic touch.

He could have even sealed the points with a rasping drive that fell inches over the bar minutes from time.

However Derby were determined to spoil the party and with perfect timing rediscovered their first-half dominance as Johnson equalised with a perfect header from Spencer Prior's long 40-yard precision cross.

Fuentes wasted a late opportunity for a valuable away win but Wimbledon hung on to ensure they took some reward for their sterling second half efforts.

Wimbledon: Sullivan, Cunningham, Roberts, Thatcher, Cort, Hartson, Euell, Gayle, Pedersen, Badir (Earle 76), Andersen.
Goals: Hartson 62, Euell 63.

Derby: Hoult, Carbonari, Schnoor (Beck 52), Powell, Johnson, Burton (Balano 70), Delap (Bohinen 65), Laursen, Prior, Fuentes, Eranio, Balano.
Goals: Carbonari 14, Johnson 81.
Crowd: 12,282

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Scottish Premier League

STAND IN SCORES VITAL GOAL

Kilmarnock 0 Celtic 1

Mark Burchill finally found a place in the Celtic line-up and promptly offered John Barnes a welcome glimpse of what he has been missing to defeat a stubborn Kilmarnock at Rugby Park.

Scotland Under-21 striker Burchill, earmarked for the senior international squad by Craig Brown, was offered his first league start of the season because of a knee injury to Mark Viduka.

Celtic were frustrated at this venue last term managing only one point and no goals in their two visits with Kilmarnock having emerged as something of a bogey side in recent seasons.

But after 72 minutes Burchill found the striker's finish which has encouraged Barnes and Brown to add their names to his list of plaudits and Kilmarnock could not recover.

The points were deserved for Celtic but they rode their luck four minutes into the second half when a Paul Wright effort struck the bar with Jonathan Gould well beaten.

Vidar Riseth returned from suspension as left wing-back, while Craig Burley adopted an attacking midfield role in place of the sidelined Eyal Berkovic (hamstring).

Kilmarnock welcomed back Kevin McGowne after a recent calf problem, while David Bagan's reward for his UEFA Cup goal against Reykjavik was a rare start.

Henrik Larsson set up Burchill inside four minutes, but after the youngster raced clear of Martin Baker he opted to shoot from too tight an angle allowing Colin Meldrum a comfortable save.

Ally Mitchell responded for the home side with a fiercely struck volley from distance after he was picked out on the edge of the area by an Ian Durrant corner.

Celtic's next two chances both fell to Olivier Tebily, but twice after being picked out by Lubomir Moravcik corners the Ivory Coast defender failed to find the target in good positions.

From one of his trademark swirling corners Moravcik picked out Alan Stubbs at the far post who nodded the ball back to Johan Mjallby, but his head-

er was knocked off the line by Gus MacPherson.

Another opportunity was spurned on 36 minutes when a teasing Moravcik cross saw both Larsson and Burley unmarked at the far post only for the Swede to put off his colleague.

Celtic's frustration was growing and they were again denied on 44 minutes when Moravcik's fierce drive was blocked by Gary Holt and Paul Lambert rifled the loose ball wide of the mark.

Celtic were fortunate to escape falling behind after 49 minutes after MacPherson's long ball enabled Paul Wright to beat the offside trap.

The Ayrshire club's record signing had time and space to measure a shot, but while his chip defeated the onrushing Gould it bounced off the crossbar with McNamara clearing the danger.

To their credit Celtic responded like a team who had conceded a goal and had swift claims for a penalty refused as Larsson complained MacPherson used a hand to thwart a run at goal.

Larsson forced his way through after 87 minutes before hitting a shot just the wrong side of the post for Celtic's liking then was denied by the offside flag in the final minute.

NO GOALS OR POINTS FOR DONS

Rangers 3 Aberdeen 0

Michael Mols led the way with a double strike as unrelenting Rangers strolled past a directionless Aberdeen at Ibrox in what was a predictable affair from start to finish.

The gulf between the two teams now reads 18 points after six league matches with Rangers enjoying a 100% record and Aberdeen still without a win or even a goal.

It was damage limitation from the outset for Ebbe Skovdahl's side who fell behind to Mols' 16th-minute drive from distance and saw their fate sealed by the Dutchman's 48th-minute second.

Rangers had opportunities to add to their lead but left it until the 86th minute to stretch to three ahead when substitute Jorg Albertz slotted in a late penalty.

That strike was the 18th conceded by the Dons this term and means they remain at the foot of a Scottish Premier League table while Rangers lead by three points after Celtic's win at Kilmarnock.

There was an inevitability about Rangers moving ahead, the only question was when and after 16 minutes it was Mols who broke the deadlock with a powerful drive.

Claudio Reyna launched the move with a ball into the feet of Amato whose styl-



Another two goals for Michael Mols

ish flick was seized on by Mols who fired in his eighth goal of an already productive campaign.

Rangers wasted no time in restoring their superiority after the restart, however, as Mols doubled his and the home team's tally from close range just three minutes into the half. It concluded a sustained onslaught on the Aberdeen goal started by Mols himself who was denied by a Anderson tackle which fell kindly for Amato whose shot was pushed away by Preece.

McCann was first to the rebound but his effort was blocked on the line by Solberg only for Mols to make no mistake with the loose ball to put Aberdeen out of their misery.

Mols spurned a hat-trick opportunity after 65 minutes when after being played in by Albertz he dragged his shot too close to Preece who was able to smother the ball with relative ease.

Albertz let fly with a stunning 30yard drive after 71 minutes that had Preece beaten but flashed the wrong side of the post. The German fared better after 86 minutes, however, converting from the penalty spot after Scotland Under-21 defender Anderson felled Amato in the area.

HEARTS DEMOLISH DUNDEE

Hearts 4 Dundee 0

Power-packed Hearts leapt back to form with a comfortable thrashing of disappointing Dundee at Tynecastle.

Hearts was quickly into their stride and snatched the lead after just six minutes with a sweeping, counter-attacking strike.

Defender Paul Ritchie won a tackle on his own 18-yard line and fed Jackson whose instant through-pass sprung the Dundee offside trap and sent Gary McSwegan racing clear on the right.

The striker showed excellent awareness to centre the ball first time for strike partner Adam who confidently drove home from eight yards.

The midfield domination which Hearts had enjoyed exclusively was evaporating as Dundee began to threaten an equaliser.

However, Hearts killed the game with a second goal after 73 minutes.

McSwegan did the spade work with a

run and cross and Jackson controlled the ball expertly before despatching a crisp low drive into the bottom corner.

Relief swamped the home fans and Cameron took advantage of great lead-up work from Severin to slot home number three two minutes later as the home side relaxed.

Severin, the powerful superkid, put the final seal on victory with a richly deserved fourth goal nine minutes from time.

Hearts: Rousset, Pressley, James, Ritchie, Naysmith, Severin, Cameron, Jackson, Fogel (Locke 83), McSwegan (Juanjo 80), Adam (Wales 80).

Goals: Adam 7, Jackson 73, Cameron 75, Severin 81.

Dundee: Douglas, McSkimming (Robertson 80), Smith, Miller, Tweed, Maddison, Boyack, Rae, Falconer, Annand (Bayne 69), Grady.

Crowd: 13,378

Rangers: Charbonnier, Porini, Moore, Amoroso, Vidmar, Ferguson (Kanchelskis 76), Van Bronckhorst (Albertz 49), Mols, Reyna, Amato, McCann (Numan 67).

Goals: Mols 16, 47, Albertz 85 pen.

Aberdeen: Preece, Anderson, Bernard (Hamilton 60), Dow, Hart (McAllister 70), Jess, Mayer, Solberg, Winters (Mackie 87), Smith, Buchan.

Crowd: 49,226

HIBS WIN FLATTERS DUNDEE

Dundee United 3 Hibernian 1

Billy Dodds' injury-time penalty put the seal on a flattering victory over Hibernian at Tannadice.

Hibs could counting themselves a little unfortunate not to have grabbed a point.

United went ahead in the fourth minute when Israeli international Jan Telesnikov beat Gottskalksson from close range.

But Trinidad and Tobago striker Russel Latapy snatched an equaliser four minutes after the break with a superb curling effort from the edge of United's box.

Hibs were on top as the half drew to a close but four minutes after the break they got their deserved equaliser.

But totally against the run of play the home side went ahead when David Hannah picked up a loose ball 40 yards out and strode forward before firing a dip-

ping 25-yarder just under the bar.

With five minutes remaining Telesnikov was booked for a foul on Renwick and a dipping angled effort from substitute Stuart Lovell went just past the home post.

Hibs were pressing hard for an equaliser and substitute Mixu Paatelainen had two great efforts saved by the home keeper in the last couple of minutes before Dodds' penalty killed off the visitors.

Dundee Utd: Combe, Pascual, Hannah, De Vos, Easton, Ferraz (Thompson 70), Dodds, Telesnikov, Paterson (Venetis 70), Partridge, Delaunay (Skoldmark 80).

Goals: Telesnikov 4, Hannah 71, Dodds 90 pen.

Hibernian: Gottskalksson, Sauzes, Hughes, Dennis, Latapy, McGinlay, Hartley, Lehmann (Paatelainen 73), Renwick, Henry (Lovell 56), Brebner.

Goals: Latapy 49.

Crowd: 8,167

SETBACK FOR SAINTS

St Johnstone 1 Motherwell 1

St Johnstone suffered a massive setback ahead of their glamorous UEFA Cup clash in Monaco on Thursday after being held to a draw by Motherwell.

The home side took the lead through new £150,000 signing Thomas in the 25th minute.

Gary Bolland's in-swinging corner found the striker unmarked at the far post and he headed home his second goal in two games with the Motherwell defence all at sea.

However, St Johnstone suffered a massive blow in the 41st minute when Dods was helped down the tunnel after an innocuous looking challenge.

And it went from bad to worse for Saints in the 61st minute when Spencer fired home the Motherwell equaliser. The impressive Derek Townsley cut the ball back across goal for Spencer to fire home from close range.

After the injury to Dodds, Republic of Ireland Under-21 International Keith

O'Halloran came on and Motherwell made sure he had a lot of work to do.

After the heartache of losing Dods, Clark will have been encouraged to see the introduction of George O'Boyle after nine months on the sidelines with a groin injury.

Saints might have grabbed a winner in the 85th minute but Motherwell's stand-in keeper Stephen Woods pulled off a fine save to his left to deny Gary Bolland from the penalty spot after Tony Thomas had up-ended O'Neil in the box.

St Johnstone: Main, McQuillan, Dasovic, Weir, Simao (O'Boyle 80), O'Neil, Kane, Bolland (Parker 67), Griffin, Dods (O'Halloran 41), Thomas.

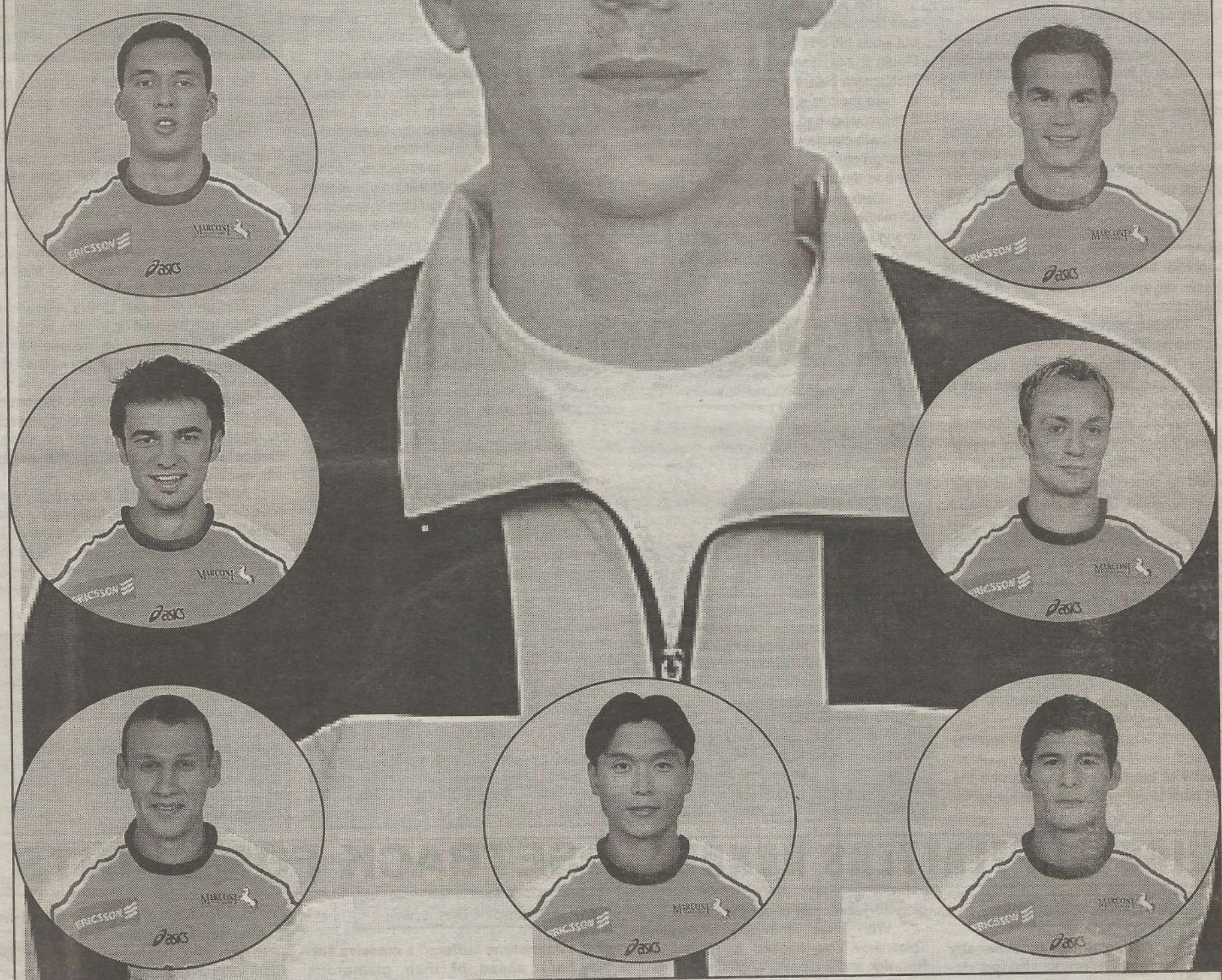
Goals: Thomas 25.

Motherwell: Woods, Doesburg, McMillan, Brannan, Teale, Spencer (Nicholas 81), Valakari, McCulloch (Halliday 62), Adams (Nevin 57), Thomas, Townsley.

Goals: Spencer 61.

Crowd: 5,467

EDDIE KRNCVIC SAYS WE CAN WIN THE LEAGUE



PICTURED ABOVE (TOP LEFT DOWN) CHAD GIBSON, SEAN BABIC, MARK BABIC AND (TOP RIGHT DOWN) BRAD MALONEY, HARRY KARL AND PAOLO MARCHESINI. CENTRE BOTTOM IS THE SOUTH KOREAN MASTER PAN-KEUN KIM

MARCONI STALLIONS' NEW COACH EDDIE KRNCVIC HAS THROWN DOWN THE GAUNTLET BY STATING, AT THE CLUB'S MEDIA LAUNCH, HIS TEAM IS GOOD ENOUGH TO WIN THE LEAGUE. AND WITH A SQUAD BURSTING WITH TALENT, THE MAN WHO TOOK CARLTON TO A GRAND FINAL IN HIS ROOKIE COACHING YEAR, MAY WELL BE THERE AGAIN. COVERAGE OF MARCONI'S MEDIA LAUNCH INSIDE.